

ENGLAND AFTER WAR. From The Fortnightly Review.

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ENGLAND AFTER WAR.

With the peace of Pretoria it is a remarkable probability that England has fought her last war of conquest and touched the limit of her expansion. The South African struggle can never be regarded as a detached episode or even as an unavoidable crisis in the long work of bringing the two races nearer to a final adjustment of their relations. It was part of a wider question and formed the necessary climax of British development in the last continent that remained to be thrown open to Colonial enterprise. The whole earth has been staked out so far as it was possible for local conflicts and settlements to decide. In the problems of the Nearer and the Further East, we have history moving back to where it began, and as it is unlikely that they can be solved except by Armageddon or an Areopagus of the world, they may be allowed to wait indefinitely for solution. Even if the partition of China should ever be undertaken, the United States would have to take over our share, and those who advocate that we should place ourselves in permanently irreconcilable contact with Russia by the seizure of Southern Persia will find less and less support from a sane nation. No. Three centuries after Elizabeth, let us say of the expansion of England—it is finished.

Thus far we have been led from point to point by the automatic sequence of events. Either an independent South Africa had to crystallize round the Transvaal, or the Transvaal had to be absorbed into British South Africa. Johannesburg was the growing spot of the situation in one continent, precisely as Pittsburg had been in another. Now at last we have reached something like a clear break in the process which has continually compelled us to go further in order to maintain what we had. What England has now to deal with is the enormous work of keeping a quarter of the globe and a third of its population permanently under the control of the least numerous and prolific of its four principal white peoples, and it may safely be suggested that we have failed as yet to grasp the real magnitude and even the nature of the task to which we are committed. It is quite possible on this point to share almost completely the opinions of Mr. Chamberlain and to be in considerable sympathy with the temperament of Mr. John Morley. Even when we count the colonies as full partners in the business, our dominion is excessive and far too huge and heterogeneous for full efficiency. To deny the disadvantages of empire would be almost more dangerous than to despair of our ability

to surmount them. Nothing could be more repugnant to some kinds of Imperialists than some kinds of Imperialism. The Imperialism which squeaks through the penny trumpets and swaggers in the music halls, is of all the sentiments masquerading in the name of patriotism anywhere in the world, the most vulgar, blatant and inept.

Let us see how far we have been carried by the current of the last quarter of a century. It is seldom realized that our colonial development was never so vast and rapid, not even under Chatham, as it has been in the final phase. Since the beginning of the scramble for Africa we have added two and a-half million square miles of territory to the Empire.¹ And this without counting Egypt and its Hinterland, which figure upon the map for another million of square miles. In the same period Russia has increased her territory by rather less than a million square miles, including Manchuria. Yet there has hardly been a moment throughout the whole process in which we have not been found denouncing Russia for her unscrupulous aggrandizement, and explaining our own moderation and righteousness to the world. This is one of the contrasts we ought to find it most profitable to consider, when next we speculate with naive perplexity upon foreign hostility and misunderstanding. One of the chief causes of our tendency to comparative ineffectiveness is that the energies of forty millions of white people in these islands, or fifty millions including the colonies, are immeasurably more dispersed and overloaded than those of the United States or Germany, with their larger and more rapidly increasing population. We cannot have so much of our best ability employed in India and Egypt, for instance, without losing some of the force which would have contributed to

maintain our eminence at home in government, science, and business. As it is, we have now brought under our power, direct or velleid, more than twelve million square miles of territory, and more than four hundred millions of men. Language is helpless to bring home to the British mind a proper conception of the stupendous disproportion between its moral and mental energies and the political task it has undertaken. If Englishmen were beyond comparison the ablest, freshest, best trained, and most numerous of all ruling races, present or past, the maintenance of empire would tax all their qualities. If the Anglo-American world were united to support the burthen, the strength available would be no more than sufficient. In the meantime, the fact remains that we have added to our responsibilities, since the flag was first hoisted in the Transvaal, territory equal to the whole area of the United States, though we had held more than twice as much before. As an alternative to the loss of South Africa, a disaster which would have shaken the whole of our power to pieces, we never waged a more necessary and opportune struggle than the South African War. But we should accept it as our last war of conquest, and the question is how far it has shown us to be naturally fitted and how far equipped for the business of keeping what we hold, of endeavoring to set the Empire upon a basis of common policy and common interest, and of developing, with the aid of the Colonies, the fresh guarantees we require for the preservation of our sea-power and commercial supremacy.

As the only certain periodical test of the quality of a nation, no substitute for war has been discovered. It is in itself an immense stimulus, and usually raises creative energy to a higher power in a way that does far more than merely repair in a short time the waste of life and wealth it causes. All na-

¹ "Times" Encyclopædia, vol. i.

tions, after a very prolonged enjoyment of peace, begin to wonder how far they have been corrupted by ease. A decade ago, as the increased self-confidence and vigor derived by America and Germany from two great struggles became more and more perceptible by contrast with our own increasing symptoms of slowing down, it was the opinion of many of us that nothing would be so good for England as a just war which would rouse her to the core. We have had our struggle, very different from any that we had anticipated, and it cannot be said that, to those amongst us who held the opinion just expressed, the retrospect is wholly satisfactory. The conditions have been, of all imaginable conditions, perhaps the least favorable to a good moral effect. It has been a very long and a very expensive contest, and upon a vital issue. But it has not given us the inspiration that we should have derived from a really great war against another first-class Power, with our existence at stake. We have always felt that the Boer was a preposterously little fellow, and that the work of crushing him, though it would have been madness to shrink from it, was not in itself an essentially pleasant or heroic thing to carry through. What has been the upshot? There is no doubt—there can hardly be a doubt, even in the minds of those, like Mr. Morley, who hate all wars and this one most—that England is measurably better for her experience. She is, on the whole, more sober, more earnest, less tolerant of shams, and more anxious for improvement. But she realizes, as she never had done before, the almost hopeless inertia of her present political system, and it remains, unfortunately, very questionable as to whether she has sufficient clearness and persistency of purpose to compel any searching change. The test applied by the war to national character has, therefore, had two broadly-con-

trasted results. It has shown some of our characteristics to be even better than we could have expected, and others to be rather worse than we had feared. In a word, England has indeed found herself, and she has also found herself out.

The "mafficking" orgies meant nothing more nor less than that the ugly sediment which we all knew to exist at the bottom of our social system had come seething to the top. They showed how alarmingly quick will be the thoroughly coarse and vicious elements of our civilization to seize upon any evil example for the future. But this is nothing new. We have always known that the worst part of the London mob would be a disgrace and a danger if it ever got out of hand. "Mafficking" has simply shown with formidable clearness the force of that suggestion. We may be absolutely certain that in times of public excitement, with peril nearer home, the brutal side of this huge rowdism, if it should once break out, will be as menacing as its levity is uncouth, unwholesome, and repellent. We shall be wise if, remembering how rapidly this sort of thing grows monstrous by what it feeds on, if it is allowed to indulge its appetite, we make far more serious attempts to prevent it for the future. In the meantime, it has been the most instructive object-lesson we have yet had upon the urgency of housing and temperance reform. But nothing could be more absurd and unjust than to represent rowdism broken loose as a proof of the corruption of national character. If the pro-Boers, who are also advanced Radicals, really believed that to be so, they would have to admit that the era of School Boards has been an era of degeneration among the people. The truth is, of course, as Thomas à Kempis would say, that occasions do not change men, but simply show what they are. The class which holds up the

mirror to the music hall, and whose public accents are the gramophone of the same institution, has behaved in time of war precisely as it was expected to behave by those who studied it in time of peace. With the painful displays which brought all our social sediment to the surface, ninety per cent. of the people had nothing to do.

And for the passive qualities displayed by the nation as a whole hardly any praise could be excessive. It had never shown itself at any moment of its whole history a stronger people than in the weeks following Nicholson's Nek. It was silent, steady, prompt, acting upon the instant with the very instinct of ordered energy in the face of all the disaster and humiliation of a situation almost maddening for a nation which had gone into this war with an absolutely confident expectation that, whatever happened, there would be no more Majuba surprises. In the crisis of the struggle no country could have kept its head better. Since then, the tenacity and restraint with which an infinitely dull and uninspiring struggle was supported, has been a still more convincing proof of national nerve and judgment. Always clement in feeling towards the Boers, and always relentless in its determination to make them British citizens, our democracy has been proof, to an extraordinary extent, against all the influences of sentimentalism and of irritated impatience. Admiring their small and splendid energy more and more, and wishing heartily that fate had never compelled us to extinguish their independence, but perceiving clearly that any solution short of the unification of South Africa under the flag would be ruin, our people showed it to be impossible either to coax them into weakness or to goad them into bitterness. There can be no rational denial that in all these matters the country has come out of the war supremely well. Precisely

the moral spirit which has been shown by the country has been reflected by the army in the field. The Boers have seen in the long run the best of the British temperament. Its good sense, good humor, its unassuming and indomitable manliness have been as complete a revelation to our opponents, as their own extraordinary skill and gallantry have been to us. Boer and Briton have found that they are wonderfully well fitted to like each other. We have a right to think that no other nation could have fought its enemy with so much resolution, and succeeded in closing with him in the end upon such cordial terms. It is true that we have only borne with perfect stanchness in the crisis of the war a weight of taxation relatively less than Frenchmen bear at all times. It is also true, and upon this head there is a genuine discount to be made from our praises, that the enemy had no ships; that so long as the Great Powers refused to take up his cause, his case was hopeless from the beginning, and our home position one of the most absolute impunity. It is with "Hannibal at the Gate" that Roman nerve is really tested, and we have known nothing approaching to that test in this war. But there was something in the demeanor of the nation between Nicholson's Nek and Paardeberg which must have convinced most observers that, even with Hannibal at the Gate, the English people would show themselves to be full of the raw material of greatness.

That it would be other than very raw material the war with all its "lessons" has given no guarantee. Let it be admitted that it has proved in an extraordinary manner how the traits of a race may survive substantially unchanged generations after the conditions of its existence have been transformed. Obstinacy, judgment, order, union—all these things have been displayed as if our street-bred civilization had disap-

peared and the whole nation had reverted to the type of its traditional yeomen. There has been again the instinct for dealing with a definite emergency by taking the surest course and avoiding the risks which make success brilliant or failure fatal. Englishmen under the actual stress of a crisis are still the calmest and most discerning of races. They are far less fertile and ingenious in resources than Frenchmen, but far more likely to do the simply right thing. They are far less educated than Germans, and yet they are more reasonable, far less logical but saner, far less open to ideas but infinitely more impervious to sophistry. We express a right feeling when we say we have not degenerated. But let us face the converse of that proposition, which is that we have not progressed. America is developing every day a thousand fresh forms of energy and inventiveness. Germany in a single generation has developed in spite of militarism and protection a manufacturing activity which is almost as extensive as our own. The nation of metaphysicians and musicians has surpassed us in the technique of industry, and the greatest military people is deeply advanced in the work of creating for itself a wholly fresh form of national power in the shape of a fleet, much more compactly organized and rather more competently managed than our own. In the case both of the German Empire and the United States there has been an immense progress in their position relatively to ours. The experiences of the war ought to have satisfied us that if we have not degenerated absolutely, we have not developed, and, what is far more serious, that we show more alarming symptoms of losing the power to develop than have appeared at any previous period of our history.

No conviction of the necessity of change, no mere effort of argument or

imagination avails with us to overcome lethargy and to secure reform. Nothing but the immediate and overwhelming pressure of facts in the midst of emergency seems able to compel us to move, and crises would have to be chronic to keep us in motion. This old characteristic, the most inveterate fault of our temperament, has been responsible for our failures to make adequate preparation in the past against the most obvious dangers, and by far the most disquieting sequel of the war is the visible tendency to sink back into the slough of inertia and to make no effective alteration in the old method which must lead sooner or later, in the modern world, to worse than the old results. Whether the desire for efficiency was vehement, as at the moment of our reverses, or languid, as it has once more become since our relapse into otiose security, it has remained impotent to bring to bear any drastic influence upon political action. British democracy, the best meaning in the world, combines the virtue of moderation with the defect of the utmost vagueness of mind and the utmost indolence of will in a way that makes the practical effect of its moderation exceedingly vicious for all regular purposes. Infinitely the most serious psychological problem of the empire is the evident fact that democracy, instead of proving violent and unreasonable, seems far more indecisive, procrastinating and less able to force the execution of its real wishes, than the aristocracy or the middle classes ever were in the period when they controlled the State. And though the classes have indisputably shown more discontent than the masses, it is also patent that the aristocracy and the middle classes themselves have largely lost their old habits of political vigor and initiative since their loss of power.

After the first ignominious exposures of the war, when its knowledge of

everything that had occurred behind the scenes was still very imperfect, the country arrived at the definite conclusion that unless some great stirring of heart and intellect came to force large changes in national organization, we should sooner or later suffer the total catastrophe that in South Africa we have had every possible opportunity to escape. Since then, the disclosures as to the management of the army up to the moment when Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener took over the command, have proved far graver than the worst we had expected when the first spasmodic and perfunctory agitation for efficiency was excited. That agitation has since died away, and no real popular force in favor of it is at present acting, either upon the Government or upon the Opposition. We show once more the most ominous signs of returning to a state of tolerable complacency, even with respect to the army. But, again, what are the facts? The men, whenever they have had competent and determined leadership, have proved that they are compact of courageous and determined fighting stuff. They have been subjected to no such bloody tests as in the Peninsula and the Crimea, but they have displayed immense powers of physical and moral endurance, and the hand-to-hand grapple of Wagon Hill was enough to show that the stubborn fibre of the rank and file remains what it has always been. There is no deterioration, and surprisingly little alteration of any sort. In the same way Lord Roberts has appeared as a great leader of men, Lord Kitchener as a great master of method. There is, of course, no real test for generalship but its ability to cope with generalship. Neither of the two chiefs of the army during the South African war have been called upon to meet opponents capable at any time of effective counter-action, and we can make no absolute measure of their military

ability in the absence of the tolerably certain criteria of generalship afforded by the conditions of European war between anything like fairly well-matched opponents. But with such means of judgment as are at our disposal, we are entitled to think that Lord Roberts would be recognized under any circumstances as a born captain in the field, and Lord Kitchener as a born organizer at headquarters. The Empire has not always had two military figures of anything like equal capacity in its previous crises, and the country would have had reason to be proud at any epoch of having produced them. Around them has appeared a body of able lieutenants. But all this must not blind us to the fact that in a struggle against a first-class Power, capable of offensive strategy, we should have had no time to eliminate incompetence and to sift out ability. Any European enemy would have pushed home with fatal effect such successes as were won by the Boers at the outset, and our general breakdown would have led at once to the irreparable catastrophe. This is the vital consideration which nothing that has occurred since General Buller's failures can alter. We have only succeeded in retrieving our reverses by the aid of unlimited time and unlimited numbers.

As Froude learned history by writing it, we have learned the art of war by making it; but under no other circumstances conceivable could we have drawn off from defeat with the same impunity or enjoyed the same leisure for the purpose of creating a wholly new organization. There have never been more ignominious episodes of bad and weak leadership than some which we have experienced in the late war. And, in spite of all the explanations that have been given, the country is convinced that the frequency and, in some cases, the facility with which surrenders have taken place have left

a broad slur upon the records of the campaign. It is, no doubt, sheer lack of imagination rather than any worse feeling which has led, in at least one instance, to an annual dinner in which men who were taken prisoners together commemorate the anniversary of their passing under the Caudine forks. But the number of the surrenders, under circumstances where the effect upon our prestige was known to be of the most unfortunate character, remains a moral blot upon the war. There has been, on the other hand, a strange reluctance to force an issue by shedding blood. Not only did General Buller show this trait in Natal, when he threw away in successive defeats a number of lives which would have secured victory if he had possessed the nerve to sacrifice them in any one action. Lord Roberts showed it at Paardeberg, where the prolongation of the bombardment gave the moral honors, after all to Cronje, who stiffened the Boers by a desperate example. If Lord Kitchener had been allowed to drive his attack home, even with a heavy cost of life, there can be little doubt that the short, stern way would have considerably contributed to our military prestige and the shortening of the war.

On the whole, the Army has simply not failed where failure would have been indelibly disgraceful. We have done in three years what, with sufficient intelligence and determination, we should have done in three months. A war which ought to have cost twenty millions has taken over two hundred millions more, and the penalty of inefficiency has been the waste of a stupendous sum, half of which would more than double the fighting strength of the fleet, while the other half would have been enough to give us the finest educational endowment in the world.

In the meantime, the report of the

Committee upon Military Education is the damning commentary upon so much feebleness of insight and impulse. These vices, let us grasp it, have shown themselves throughout the struggle, whether in the field or in politics, to be the reverse side of all the moderation and restraint upon which we pride ourselves overmuch. That report might be accepted, except for penal purposes, as a substitute for the promised enquiry into the war. No parliamentary investigation could go nearer to the root of the mischief. In any other European country this exposure of mental sloth and social triviality would be properly regarded as more deeply discreditable than any of the South African humiliations which it explains. What may be said of our passive qualities after the war cannot be said of our active. If we are to measure by the extent of our preoccupation with the things of the mind and the things of the spirit, then the war has shown that in the last half century there has been a great moral retrogression. Physical exercise has become our religion. Disbelief in every sort of earnestness has become our special form of infidelity. There is no fanaticism amongst us, but there is also nothing that deserves the name of faith. Even the cult of empire, sincere and instinctive as it is, is far too diffuse and vague, far too lacking in all the force and definition of thorough purpose, to be worthy of the name of faith. It is a sentiment which tends to resolve itself into one prolonged peroration leading us away from the action of the matter. "We have a world of apprehensions here, but not the form of that we should attend." Infinitely more vigorous and alert was the temper of the nation as a whole in the epoch of the Crimean war. Intellectually we are now the least alive of all the great peoples. When Sir Ian Hamilton remarked before the Committee

on Military Education that "It is not form to show keenness," he laid his finger upon the national complaint with admirable exactness and simplicity. It is our amazing foible to pretend that everything which seizes strongly upon men is presumably false, and that the deprecation of all decisive and strenuous conviction is the preeminent proof of national wisdom. If conviction ventures to show itself not only vehement but original, it is forthwith doubly damned. So far from believing that "provident fear is the mother of safety," we are determined not to be alarmed, and whenever facts show a disagreeable tendency we deny that they mean what they seem to mean until they are consummated by a catastrophe almost beyond the reach of remedy.

The jealousies and supineness of English shipping companies in the last decade have been probably as serious a form of national inefficiency as anything of which we could accuse the War Office. If the Blue Ribbon of the Atlantic was carried off by the Germans, it was nothing. Was the Leyland Line Morganeered? Nothing. Was the Shipping Trust formed? We had reprobated all the mischievous rumors of such impossible extremes, but as soon as the deal itself was disclosed, we declared with magnificent consistency that this also was nothing, and that in fact it was very natural and a positive advantage. Before the event, incredulity; after the event, impotence. Under any circumstances "it is not form to show keenness," except in demonstrating that nothing will happen, that nothing has happened, and that all the persons who suggest a provident fear are the victims of hallucination. We cannot separate the question of the education of the army from the loss of intellectual strenuousness, the decline in the spirit of thought and labor in the nation as a

whole. The fundamental cause of all our educational backwardness is its total lack of "keenness" for educational progress. A darling ideal of our educators themselves is to reduce all enthusiasm, to encourage cooling down, to substitute sceptical equipoise for the spirit of action and critical detachment for creative heat. In one word, it is the passion for knowledge that is wanting. It is the light of the mind that we lack. American energy, German vehemence, French fervor upon the one side, and upon the other the nation which thinks it bad form to show keenness and makes a foible of inertia!

There was not one of our humiliations in the war but was traceable to this cause; there is not one of our difficulties in trade or politics but derives from the same origin; and unless we are to think far less of moderation and far more of keenness for the future, we shall fail in peace, we shall fail sooner or later in war, and we shall fail in the attempt to realize the Empire which we have extended by three and a-half million square miles during the very years which, by some obscure moral process, have blunted the edge of all our energy. "Never are moral forces at rest," said Scharnhorst; "they decline as soon as they cease striving to increase." It would be hard to quote a sentence more characteristic of the German national temper or less characteristic at this moment of anything in English public spirit.

It would be futile to suggest any immediate recipe for a problem of temperament at once so serious and so vague. "Strength," said Mr. Meredith long ago to France—

Strength is not won by miracle or
rape,
It is the offspring of the modest years,
The gift of sire to son by those firm
laws

Which we call God's, which are the righteous cause,
The cause of man and manhood's ministers.

Without the effective will in the nation at large to secure improvement, no tinkering of institutions, no shuffling of men, can much avail. How far that will is effective is the issue which the war has left us. Given the vigorous and clear-minded leadership, without which democracy is the most helpless of all systems, there can be little doubt that the wish for change, which now seems as lethargic as it is universal, would respond powerfully and rapidly to the right interpretation. At the present moment the sheer sense of impotence to bring the real desire of the public mind to bear upon the public servants is more answerable than all other causes, for the subsidence of the cry for efficiency. Lord Rosebery has also done much to injure that cause by the inimitably *dilettante* and occasional manner in which he has preached efficiency at large, until the word has come to be associated with the last degree of vagueness and unreality. But the chief reason of the feeling of public paralysis lies in the state of the party system. Constant competition was the genius of that system. The alternation of governments has been the only possible means open to the country of securing the execution of its will. It is useless to wish upon the one hand that the Liberal party should be different from what it is, or upon the other that the Unionist party, despite all that it ought to be in theory, were less profoundly disappointing in practice. We have to take the Ministerialists and the Opposition as they are—the one stale, effortless, perfunctory, tired of their position, and tired of their leaders, with every mark of an exhausted party upon them; the other, an Opposition unable to agree upon a leader or a pro-

gramme, and to a large extent in fundamental antagonism with the purposes for which the country desires a change of Government to be effected.

The war has not only played havoc with military reputations. It has unquestionably left us in politics with a sense of being far poorer in men than we had imagined. Only two politicians have increased their reputations. The one is Mr. Chamberlain. The other is Mr. John Morley, who has been the most unflinching opponent of the war, but who has maintained the most unpopular opinions in a way that has distinctly increased the respect with which he has been regarded by the country.

Apart from the Colonial Secretary the country would see the Government disappear without regret, and, indeed, with a deep sense of relief. When Lord Salisbury has retired, Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Balfour will remain as the only two members of the Cabinet with the slightest hold upon national imagination. The country would dispense readily with all their colleagues. This, it may be conceded, is rather usual than singular. A Cabinet often depends upon the influence of one or two of its statesmen, when the nation is indifferent to the rest. But in this case the position is anomalous, since it becomes less and less probable that the first man in the ministry will be allowed, after Lord Salisbury's retirement, to succeed to the first place. Short of this, no shuffling of the pack will be received with enthusiasm. Mr. Balfour is far from having lost his hold upon the country. He is not an unpopular minister, and the circumstances under which he would appear as an unpopular minister can scarcely be conceived. But there is a broad distinction to be drawn. As a critical and reconciling influence, the Leader of the House would be invaluable in any Cabinet, but a Cabinet bearing the impress

of his temper as head of the Government would extinguish the expectation of effective and vigorous rule. Mr. Balfour could not communicate to a Cabinet over which he presided the constructive energy which he does not possess, and no colleague, not even Mr. Chamberlain, could usurp the function. Under Mr. Balfour's leadership of the House, the Unionist majority has been for many sessions a slack and murmuring majority. The Government has never been more unfortunate than in the legislation with which Mr. Balfour has been most completely identified. We agree that there is no national question so important as education. The war lasted three years, but Mr. Balfour's struggle to carry any large measure of educational reform has lasted six, and it would be hard to name any series of legislative enterprises which have ever created a more irritated sense of dissatisfaction and hopelessness in the country. The present Education Bill will be carried because another breakdown would be fatal. But again it excites no enthusiasm in the country. It redeems the pledges given by the Conservative members of the Cabinet to the friends of voluntary schools. It places Elementary Education upon a more logical and solid basis. But Secondary Education, which is the main, pressing and vital issue in the minds of all educational reformers, is the merest side issue in Mr. Balfour's measure. The Bill probably solves the sectarian problem. It does not touch the national problem. When it has been passed Secondary Education will remain in a state of chaos, tempered by a two-penny rate. For all the Imperial purposes of educational reform, in its really grave and urgent sense, another session will be wasted—the seventh since 1896. In a word, this is not the Bill that the country needs, and it is not the Bill that Mr. Chamberlain would have brought in. With all his

delightfully acute and suggestive faculty in debate, and his extraordinary attractiveness and reasonableness of mind, Mr. Balfour is not primarily a constructive minister; he is not a master of men; to the driving power of the nation he does not contribute; and if he is to succeed, as appears certain, to the Premiership, the country will definitely prefer a change of Government at the first opportunity.

If ever a minister not at the head of an administration had established a claim to be placed at the head of his party and of his colleagues, that man is Mr. Chamberlain. The Cabinet owes its continued existence to the Colonial Secretary alone. The vast majority of the Empire throughout the war has regarded him as its representative. Without him the Government would have been overthrown, Lord Milner's position would have been untenable, and the settlement which has been reached would in all probability have been prevented by the disaster of a patched-up peace. When Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener receive recognition, how are Mr. Chamberlain's services to be recognized? The Premiership would be his only fit and, indeed, his only possible reward. It hardly admits of argument that a Chamberlain Cabinet would be the most efficient Cabinet possible, since it would be the only combination in which the real ascendancy would belong to the nominal head. This, it might be imagined, would be considered by Unionists, if not by the Opposition, as the most obvious step towards efficiency at large, since that quality must reside in the Government or will reside nowhere.

Instead of this, the arguments of Mandarindom are used as if the lessons of the war had never been known. Granted that Mr. Chamberlain is incomparably the strongest personality in the Unionist party, and that the Unionist party is one—the Tories, we

are told, would never follow him. They will consent to be kept in power by him. They will consent that another leadership should owe its possibility of existence to Mr. Chamberlain's loyalty. But Mr. Chamberlain's own leadership they will not have. The country at large, and the Tory democracy of the great cities, hardly less emphatically than the Liberal-Unionists of Birmingham, desire that the Colonial Secretary should be Prime Minister. But the majority in the country is as impotent to have that desire carried out in presence of all the *chinoiserie* etiquette and convention of official politics, as if the franchise had never been extended. In presence of a situation of this character, when the premiership itself is upon the point of passing by a process which is little else than that of hereditary succession, and when Mr. Chamberlain is disqualified from being Prime Minister mainly because he is a Liberal-Unionist, we may very well doubt whether the means of obtaining efficiency under our Parliamentary system really exist. Moltke thought not. The cry of "Reconstruction," which was rife during the crisis of the war, has died away since the General Election. Lord Salisbury's changes in his Cabinet were not interesting, and have not been effective. The country still thinks that it desires Reconstruction. What it does desire is a Ministry with Mr. Chamberlain at its head. Short of that stimulating change, it will decline to be exhilarated by the coming shuffling of portfolios, and it will decline to continue the Government in power. If the Colonial Secretary were Premier, upon the other hand, his position in the country would be more like Palmerston's than that of any other statesman, and he would be very likely to remain in office for the greater part of the next decade.

Upon its own merits the Opposition is as little attractive to the country as

in 1895 or in 1900. Lord Rosebery is no longer a statesman in whom the empire rests its expectation. As he repeats with little variation his exposition of general principles, his speeches become less brilliant, and do not become less vague. Since the Chesterfield appearance, he has definitely ceased to attract non-Liberal opinion, and in confining his appeal more and more to his own party, he has not succeeded in removing Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's leadership or in asserting his own. The Opposition has no definite financial policy, no definite educational policy, no definite foreign policy, no definite Irish policy. We now know that they will not again bring in a Home Rule Bill unless they are compelled; but, if they cannot take office except upon sufferance of the Irish vote, they will be free, and probably willing to bring in a Home Rule Bill. In its general attitude towards politics, Radicalism has now definitely declared itself to be the Tory Party of the future. The writer does not mean to say that this attitude is not legitimate. "Resistance to reaction," as Mr. Morley considers it, may very possibly seem from the Liberal point of view to be the most urgent of all functions. But the non-partisan statement of the position is that the principal Radical duty is now defined as resistance to change.

The country has a great discontent with things as they are. It is full of the vague desire for change. It has most certainly lost all clear faith in Free Trade since the industrial development of Germany under Protection. But it is still far from liking the name of Protection or trusting the thing. It is irritated when it is told that Cobdenism is not an arguable issue, and that no sacrilegious hand must be laid upon the Ark of the Covenant. It is very much inclined to try cautious experiments. The force of the objections

against raising the cost of raw material every child can grasp. But it is perfectly possible to construct a tariff leaving raw material free, and a very large part of the popular opinion, probably the majority, would like to see a duty placed upon imports of manufactured articles. To follow this line of thought here would take us too far.

Any proposal for considering the wisdom, from the point of view of commercial strategy, of modifying our fiscal system, is met by the reply that whoever questions Free Trade is an incredible ignoramus. That familiar example of the one subject of controversy in which arrogant impertinence is regarded as a fair substitute for argument, loses more support for mere doctrinaire and dogmatic Cobdenism than it wins. It leaves out of sight the only issue upon which Free Trade is or can be attacked. For all immediate purposes cheap imports *must* favor the consumer more than he could be favored by any protective system. But whether Free Trade is equally favorable to the utmost enterprise, self-confidence and creative energy of the British manufacturer, pitted against protected rivals, is quite another issue; and creative enterprise is a far more powerful factor in eventually cheapening production than even free importation can be. But this is beyond the occasion. The point is that upon what may be the greatest issue of the future—certain to be raised in connection with national finance, if not in the shape of commercial union with the Colonies—Radicalism for the first time means resistance to change, while Mr. Chamberlain appears as the least tied to tradition of all our living statesmen. Whether the Opposition in the negative attitude, no matter how cogent may be its case, can ever recover popular sympathy to the degree enjoyed when it was pursuing its former function of

advocating change may well be doubted.

Neither can the fact be ignored that the intense unpopularity of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, and of the anti-war section of his party generally, will survive for some time the war itself. When they are brought to book at the hustings by extracts from their speeches, vituperating the motives and maligning the conduct of the war, they will be in a considerably more uncomfortable predicament than they at present realize. Above all is the fact that in the firm opinion of the country the Irish members, by their conduct upon the war, have made themselves impossible. No party for the future can traffic upon that side with impunity, but the words of Lord Rosebery and his followers may mean anything from Unionism to Gladstonianism, and the country feels that it will mean the latter or the former according to the exigencies of the electoral situation. Add to this the fading of Lord Rosebery's personal prestige with the middle mind of the nation, and it is apparent that the Opposition would have, under ordinary circumstances, little prospect of returning to power upon their own positive merits.

But the circumstances are not at all ordinary. The greatest need of the nation is a healthy revival of party antagonism. No other means of securing efficiency under a representative system has yet been known, and no other can be possible so long as human nature is what it is and Parliamentary Governments are what they are. The Unionist Party suffers from the debility which invariably follows upon seven years of practically undisputed ascendancy. It is not in the nature of things that they can recover the freshness and the zest of power. Their position no longer interests them, and they do not interest the country. Were Mr. Chamberlain to become Prime Min-

ister, the situation would be different. The Government, dominated by the spirit of Highbury instead of that of Hatfield, would be for all practical purposes as completely a new government as if parties had crossed the floor of the House. Such a Ministry would be at least vital and interesting. With the clearest mind, the most signal executive ability in England at its head, and with the Premiership restored to immediate contact with the House of Commons, there would be a considerably greater likelihood of efficiency being exacted and secured than under any other combination. It is no doubt a serious question whether the Unionist Party, under any circumstances or under any leadership, ought to be returned for a third consecutive period of office. But a Chamberlain Cabinet would be so certain to brace up our whole political system, to attempt large tasks, to divide men upon clear-cut issues, and to excite such genuine antagonisms of personality and principle, that men who care nothing for party in itself would be strongly tempted to vote for the Colonial Secretary as Premier.

Under any other circumstances the same men would not support the further existence of the Government. In spite of all the objections that have been mentioned, the best course then for the general purposes of restoring as far as possible the full vigor of the party system, would be to put the Opposition in power. The reasons are clear. The Navy would almost certainly be as well administered under a Radical as under a Unionist Government. For the purposes of overcoming the resistance of social influence to a thorough reform of army education and organization, the Liberals would be more suitable in many ways than their opponents. With regard to Colonial Policy, no Ministry under Lord Rosebery, or even under Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, would think it safe or

desirable to make any marked departure from Mr. Chamberlain's tone and methods. It may be urged that the ambiguity of the Irish policy of Lord Rosebery and his friends disqualifies them. If there were less urgent need for a new departure in the spirit of English politics and the temperament of British Governments, that would be a final objection. As matters are, it may well be overruled. For practical purposes it is more an objection in form than in fact. Whatever the transaction the Liberals might attempt with the Nationalists, if unable to obtain a working majority without the support of the Irish votes, it is certain that even if a Home Rule Bill upon anything like Gladstonian lines were introduced, it could not be passed against the resistance of the House of Lords, and a Radical Government would have to choose between a dissolution such as they ought to have risked in 1893, or another ignominious attempt to spend a couple of sessions in ploughing the sands with the eventual repetition of the disaster of 1895. A Cabinet under Lord Rosebery would be far more likely to bring in a Bill certain not to satisfy the Irish members, and to rely on Unionists for the purpose of resisting Mr. Redmond's party.

In a word, if there is still danger that Gladstonian Home Rule may be proposed, there is no longer the slightest danger that it can be carried. Now with the war over, the lines of the settlement accepted, and the position of the Liberal Party upon the Irish Question become stultified and impotent, the fundamental objections which have induced the country to keep the Opposition in the bleak shade during the last seven years no longer apply. We desire two things—an alternative Government and a strong Opposition. As regards the first there is no method of making Liberalism eligible for power one half so likely as putting it in office. In the

position of less freedom and greater responsibility, compelled, above all, to face the difficulties of the financial and the problems of the Imperial situation, the Radicals would supersede a good deal of difference in theory by agreement in practice. The fresh return to the sphere of administration and legislation of men like Mr. Asquith, Sir Henry Fowler, Sir Edward Grey, Mr. Acland, Mr. Haldane and the rest, working under the suggestive influence of Lord Rosebery, would give the country a Cabinet distinctly abler upon the average than the present Unionist Ministry, or any reconstituted form of it that could follow Lord Salisbury's retirement. Above all, the Unionists, upon quitting office, would become at once, and this is perhaps the main point, an extremely powerful and vigorous Opposition.

No influence is more urgently needed in the State. The Unionists, exchanging sides with a Radical Government, would recover much of the initiative and energy they have lost, and would be far more vigilantly effective upon behalf of efficiency than they have ever been in office. We can imagine, for instance, what would have been the Unionist zeal for army reform if the exposures of the South African Campaign had occurred when they were out of power. As easily can we conceive how much more fertile in invention than the Budget of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach would have been the suggestions of Unionist criticism if directed against the War Budgets or the Peace Budgets on the present scale of expenditure of a Liberal Chancellor of the Exchequer. Nothing would be more interesting to observers of the present state of politics and few things could be more useful to the country than to see the Opposition actually charged with the work of framing a Secondary Education Bill and with the duty of bringing in proposals for meeting what will be the

normal rate of Imperial expenditure in the future without depriving the Income Tax of its character as an emergency tax and without infringing Free Trade principles. In any case, if efficiency and awakening are to be our watchwords, the immediate step for those who are discontented with the present Government must be the attempt to change it. Practically that can only be done in one of two ways. Now that the war is won, it is a perfectly arguable issue whether a healthier action would be best restored to politics by making Mr. Chamberlain Premier, or by making the Opposition a Government. But some of us at least have no sort of doubt that if the former solution should be presently excluded, as seems likely to be the case, the second course should be adopted without the slightest hesitation, and the middle mind in politics should throw its whole weight against the Unionist Party in spite of Lord Rosebery's disappointing inability to induce the wearers of the "flyblown phylacteries" to discard them, or to make his conception of efficiency anything more definite than a new way of spelling Mesopotamia.

This is the immediate issue before England after the war. Among the problems that lie behind, two are of an importance that can only be indicated here. There have been during the South African struggle an outbreak of hatred and a manifestation of love which must profoundly influence the future course of our Imperial policy, whether by their separate influence or by the contrast between them. Naval and military efficiency depend absolutely upon policy. We have never known precisely what contingency we needed an army for, and until we have made up our minds as to where the real danger of conflict is most likely to be in the future, we shall never have thorough preparation. This is the great difficulty of England as compared with

continental countries, which organize for action at definite points against a definite enemy. With the appearance of Germany as a plain danger upon the sea, no longer to be ignored after the memorable revelation of Anglophobia which has been among the most instructive results of the war, the navy is confronted by exactly the same uncertainty as to its real problem. When the German fleet is ready those who direct it will know exactly what they mean to do in case of a breach with this country, and it may be doubted whether Whitehall contemplates that contingency with anything like the clearness with which it has been considered in Berlin. Upon the other hand, if we are to think rather of providing against the possibilities of a struggle with France and Russia, there will be a different problem posed, and the army will be once more tested under conditions as widely removed from its South African experiences as these were from its previous campaigns.

It is essential that we should come to a plainer mind about foreign policy. There is a strong party amongst us which is entirely preoccupied with Russia and knows nothing of German policy. There is no reason to think that Lord Curzon and his school are not still in favor of adding South Persia to the three and a-half million square miles we have annexed in the last quarter of a century. Those who, like the present writer, believe that England's only great danger in foreign policy is upon the side of Germany, think that to ensure a settlement with Russia by relinquishing Persia to her, would enormously facilitate the sure solution of our problems of defence and finance.

But, as Mr. Morley has observed in the wisest of his remarks, "politics is a field where action is one long second-best, and the choice lies constantly between two blunders." There are grave

difficulties upon both sides in the problem of foreign policy. But the nation cannot afford to remain in two minds upon it. We are at present pursuing a course that if long maintained in the present manner would amount to political insanity. We are stimulating the naval preparations of Germany by increasing the hostility between the two peoples, and at the same time we are not trying to come nearer to a settlement with France and Russia. We must choose whether we shall have our ally upon the right hand and our antagonist on the left, or our friend upon the left and our antagonist on the right, unless we really wish to court the eventual danger of being attacked on both sides. Practical politicians who are convinced, like the writer, that it would be infinitely sounder policy to settle with Russia and to have our hands free to deal with Germany as Germany shows future signs of dealing with us, must, nevertheless, repeat that it is less important with which we settle than that we should improve our relations with one or the other. That, after the revival of the party system in full vigor, is the most obvious step towards securing the thorough preparation of both the services in peace for their probable tasks in war. If we cannot draw this moral from the fact that in all the outbursts of Continental hostility German hatred was by far the most virulent, then there is no moral to be drawn.

The converse problem of the relations between the Mother Country and the Colonies is a question that would require much more detailed examination upon another occasion. It is also one that cannot be very profitably discussed before the conference of Colonial premiers has taken place. All that can now be said with complete assurance is that in spite of the magnificent devotion to the flag shown by the Colonies in the present war, the

existence of the Empire for all the purposes of the present generation must depend upon the efforts of the Mother Country. Upon her must remain the burthen. Within her must reside the power. If the slow growth of population continues in the Colonies, it will be many decades before they are able to turn the fortunes of England in the world. It must rather be our task to keep them open for the future of the race against Powers which teem with colonists, but do not possess the Colonies.

With regard to trade, it is no doubt, otherwise, for the Colonies are already a more valuable market for our manufactures than the United States and Germany put together. They are the newest communities in the world; the greatest producers of raw and importers of finished material. The Colonies, and the Colonies alone, are and will remain the natural economic complement of the Mother Country, and upon the mastery of their markets our commercial supremacy must depend

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more than upon any other single factor in trade.

In the face, nevertheless, of the wholly new era of national life that has opened with the close of the war, one thing is at least certain. The present Government and the present Parliament have no mandate to deal in any far-reaching fashion with the Colonial issues affecting the foundations of national policy. A dissolution in the autumn, more under the normal conditions of party controversy that were impossible at the last General Election, should mark the beginning of that stirring of mind and spirit in the Mother Country without which all else must be in vain. For, though the Colonies will make increase to all we add unto ourselves, the principle of our success must be created within ourselves alone, and the Empire of a quarter of the earth, as we possess it at the end of the last war of conquest, can be maintained by no aid of the Colonies, if by comparison with other nations we lack youth and vigor at the heart.

THE SOUFFRIERE OF ST. VINCENT.

The appalling catastrophe in Martinique has drawn all eyes for the moment to those lovely islands which rise from the blue waters of the Caribbean Sea. Strange, indeed, and violent are the contrasts which meet us in that magic land. It has been my lot to pass several years of my life among those scenes of beauty, wonder, and terror. One whole night I sat and "outwatched the Bear" on a lofty peak in Dominica. Two weeks I lay down to sleep every night on the brink of that awful crater which now vomits fire and ruin over the fair fields of St. Vincent. Not soon

to be forgotten are the six days which I passed on the deck of a schooner, beating painfully to windward from St. Vincent to Barbados. One wild gallop I had on the sands of Tobago, where Crusoe gazed in horror at that solitary footprint. I can vividly remember the bustling streets and gay crowds in the hotels of St. Pierre, which now lies a heap of smoking ruins, with thirty thousand charred and battered corpses buried beneath them. I have tried, in the pages which follow, to gather into one focus the scattered reminiscences of several years. If the lighter and gayer side

of West Indian life comes uppermost in this description, the reader will not be likely, after the horrors of the last few weeks, to forget the darker aspects of the picture. We have read, and are likely to read more, of such scenes of woe and despair as are hardly to be surpassed in the history of mankind. The powers of hell have been let loose, and rained destruction on an earthly paradise. Strange irony of Nature! Imagination can frame nothing fairer to outward view than the sister islands of St. Lucia and Martinique. Yet like a treacherous beauty, whose smiles bode ruin to her lovers, they hide within their bosom the seeds of all mischief. Wasting fevers lurk in their hidden swamps, and deadly serpents wait on our path at every step; far below the fire-demon is at work, shaking the bars of his rocky prison, until the hour when he shall whelm garden and cane-field, palm-tree and spice-bearing shrub, toiler and pleasure-seeker, in one red tempest of ruin.

One island may serve as a type for all. In size, shape, vegetation, and character of the inhabitants there is a close resemblance to be traced along the whole line of those palm-clad peaks which have risen from those sunny waters. Let us, then, follow the fortunes of a band of holiday-makers who are seeking their happy hunting-ground in St. Vincent. They are five in number, all men of about the same age, young schoolmasters from Barbados. When we first make their acquaintance they are standing on the little jetty in Kingstown harbor, waiting for the mail-boat which is to carry them and their chattels to Château Belair, twenty miles down the coast. The boat is late, as everything always is in this Circean climate, and they have time to look about them. Before them lies Bequia, an island of some extent, the largest of the Grenadines which stretch

southwards in a long line, binding St. Vincent, as with an emerald chain, to Grenada. The little harbor and town have awaked for a moment from their normal state of slumber, for it is mail-day, and the quays and jetty are thronged by a jostling crowd. At last the mail-boat, which plies between Kingstown and Château Belair, nearly the whole length of the leeward coast, is seen nearing the landing-steps,—no snorting, panting steamboat, such as plies along the neighboring coast of St. Lucia, but a huge canoe made from the trunk of a single tree. In the forward part sits the crew, consisting of five burly negroes, who day after day row their unwieldy craft from Kingstown to Château Belair and back, a distance of forty miles; no white man could perform such a feat, at any rate in this climate. Between the crew and the passengers rises a huge pile of baggage and mails. After a lively altercation between one of our party and a ragged negro, who is not satisfied with his fee for carrying some goods, we take our places; the captain, a dapper little mulatto with regular features, gives the signal, and we push off. The Ethiopian porter grows frantic, as the space widens between us and the pier. "Hi! you mean white man, come back! You no gen'lman! cheat poor nigger! I'se 'member you!" But the boat sweeps round a headland, and the angry, capering figure is lost to view.

On we go, ploughing our way through a sapphire sea, round headland after headland, from bay to bay. Wooded heights rise from near the water's edge, fringed, where they meet the sky-line, with waving palms. At their foot nestle the wooden cabins of the negroes, shaded by the broad fronds of the cocoa-nut trees. Naked negro children gambol on the black volcanic sand, or dive and swim in

the tepid waters. Truly a happy creature seems the negro of St. Vincent, not the care-worn anxious being we had known in Barbados, where all must work or starve. Here there is room enough for all, and the African, if he will, may keep perpetual holiday. Clothes he has none, or next to none, and he wants none. A few sticks put rudely together serve him for a house. A little plot of land supplies his modest store of yams, plantains, and sweet potatoes. The bountiful cocoa-nut grows along all the shore, providing him with shelter, timber, meat, and wholesome drink. Cold he knows not; want can hardly reach him. Surely this at least is a place where poverty is no curse. Yet Nature has her compensations, and will not suffer any of her children to be exempt from the doom pronounced against all the sons of Adam. Fearful hurricanes sweep over these quiet retreats, levelling every tree, and scattering the frail huts like houses of cards. And not far away lies in uneasy slumber the fearful monster who will one day bury half this little world in a grave of fire.

But these are afterthoughts. No such gloomy reflections shadow our minds, as we glide smoothly along under that summer sky and over that laughing sea. The power which moves our ponderous pinnacle is hidden from view by the pile of miscellaneous goods which divides us from the crew. But we can hear them well enough, as they laugh and shout, and jest with one another; so light on those brawny shoulders lies their labor, which would soon kill one of us. Let us stand up for a moment, and we shall see them; there they are, five lusty fellows, swinging powerfully together to the cadence of a rude boatman's chant. Eyes rolling, teeth gleaming, tongues wagging, they haul away at their heavy oars as if the Soufrière were in full eruption be-

hind us. They nod and shout a greeting as they see us peeping at them over the merchandise; "Hi, master! Good evening, old master!"—and they pound away harder than ever. Once or twice we stop at some sea-side village to land passengers or mails. Then the jolly skipper places a conch-shell, pierced to form a trumpet, to his lips, and sounds a hoarse blast which fills all the hollow shore. Thus on we go, hour after hour, with no other pause until the sun begins to stoop towards the west. At last a long headland appears, and a little further to seawards a steep wooded island. Behind that headland lies our goal. The skipper shouts a challenge to his crew, and they bend their backs manfully to the call; the boat bounds forward, rounds the cape, and we glide into the smooth bay of Château Belair. A crazy wooden jetty, a row of warehouses, a little church, and a straggling street running up into the valley, such is the foreground of the picture which lies before us. Far different is the background of that homely scene. Close behind the little hamlet towers a colossal hill, clothed to its summit with a dark vestiture of forest trees. It is the Morne Garu, the Mountain of Spectres, home of the jumbie and the duppy. Dark and awful he looks, the spectre-mountain, even now, when his swarthy sides are bathed in the rich radiance of a tropical sunset. We pay him the homage which is his due; yet what is he compared to his mighty brother, who towers further northward in majestic isolation, half eclipsed in a canopy of golden cloud? One name is on our lips, one thought is in our hearts, as we cry with one voice, "The Soufrière!"

The sun is dipping in the western waters as we reach the little mountain chalet which is to be our home for the next week. Built on the top

of an isolated hill behind the village, it commands a grand view of mountain and sea. After a hasty meal we sally forth to catch a last glimpse of the great twin brethren, the main objects of our visit, now fast vanishing from view in the shadows of night. Darkness closes round us as we gaze; but a spirit of unrest is stirring in our blood, which will not suffer us to seek the shelter of our cottage, and we wander down the hill into the moist shades of the valley. It is dark, for as yet there is no moon; but soon the black wall of shadow which marks the confines of the forest begins to show glancing points of light. Thicker and thicker they spring from the ebon face of the night, these twinkling eyes of fire. Above, below, on all sides of us, the whole air is ablaze with those living lamps. It is the fire-flies who are keeping high festival to-night, revelling in the clean, rain-washed air. It is the larger sort, called by the natives *La Belle*, which is now thronging the still valley in countless myriads. For some time we gaze in huge content on these winged stars of the forest; and at last, weary with a day full of wonders, we turn our steps homewards, and are lighted by fairy lanterns to bed.

Two or three days afterwards I was lying in that dreamy reverie which hovers between sleeping and waking, when a hoarse voice broke in upon my drowsy meditations: "All right, sar! 'ere we are, sar!" Peering through the mosquito-curtains I became conscious of a gaunt figure standing in the open doorway. It was the figure of a gigantic negro, clad in a tattered shirt and short trousers ingeniously fashioned in patchwork, with bare legs and arms, and a countenance picturesquely hideous. His mouth was distended by an amiable grin, disclosing a ragged line of teeth; but his most remarkable feature was his

nose, or rather noses, for he had two of them, each sharply defined with its single nostril, and divided from its neighbor by a deep groove or channel. In one bony paw he clutched a naked cutlass, in the other was grasped the crumpled remnant of a hat. When I was sufficiently recovered from the first shock of this morning vision to be able to think, I remembered that we had on the previous day engaged the services of a negro guide named Colliss, to pilot us up the Morne Garu. The negotiation had been conducted through his wife, or Madame (as the gallant Colliss always calls his lovely helpmeet), for the great man himself was not at home, having gone up the hill to attend to his crop of arrowroot. I greeted the genial apparition therefore, and invited him to take a pipe and a dram while we were making ready to start. The mighty hunter and master of woodcraft was attended by a satellite, in the shape of a fat negro boy, to carry our supply of provisions; for he himself was far too high a personage to stoop to mere porter's work. While our single servant, an elderly negress, variously known as Crawford, Crawkins, or Squawkins, is preparing breakfast, Colliss is careful to inform us of our singular good fortune in securing his services as guide. "Yes, sar! I'se take you safe up mountain; I'se bring you back safe down mountain. Odder niggars not know de way,—starve in de forest." In the midst of his eloquence Colliss is interrupted by wild cries from the direction of the kitchen. It is the voice of Crawkins in distress. Always quick to respond to an appeal to my better feelings, I hasten to the aid of our sooty Cinderella. Alas for the hope of breakfast! Crawkins is discovered, on hands and knees before the domestic hearth, scraping up from among the cinders the mangled remains of a

comely dish of eggs and bacon. The tender nature of Crawkins was touched to its centre; each blackened and leathery fragment, as it was deposited on the dish, was bedewed copiously with her tears. I comforted her as best I might, and we breakfasted lightly on the healthful banana. Fortified by this hermit's fare we leave Crawkins in charge of our quarters, with strict injunctions not to set herself or the premises on fire, and start on our adventurous journey. In front stalks our grim and dusky Hermes, with no other burden than the ever-ready cutlass, while the boy, with a heavy basket of provisions on his head, brings up the rear.

As the ascent of the Morne Garu was but in the nature of a preliminary training to that of the Souffrière, it is unnecessary to describe this part of our adventures in detail. After a severe and prolonged effort, we reached our goal. The day was clear, and our eyes ranged over a wide prospect of mountain, forest, and sea. A vast amphitheatre of hills, connecting the Souffrière and Morne Garu in one system, encloses a sort of inland basin, broken here and there by inferior heights. Worn away as it is, and half obliterated in places, we fancy that we can trace the ruined wall of an enormous crater, formed, perhaps, in the primeval convulsion which heaved St. Vincent from the depths of the sea.

After this initiation into the lesser mysteries we brace ourselves for a bold incursion into the very home of the dread power which broods night and day, year by year, over that fair island. A week's vigorous exertion will barely suffice for our purpose. To make our present quarters the centre of our explorations is impossible, for, starting from Château Belair, the mere ascent and descent of the mountain occupy a whole day.

We must shift our camp into the very heart of the Souffrière, and spend a whole week on the brink of the crater. Accordingly, two days after the ascent of Morne Garu, we issue our orders to Colliss to bring half a dozen bearers next morning, to carry our goods to the top of the Souffrière. Early next day we start in a long procession, and make our way through the cane-fields and arrowroot-beds which lie on our way to the mountain's foot. Colliss is in his glory; with a red handkerchief wound about his bare scalp, and the remains of a felt hat perched jauntily above it, a black stump of a pipe in his mouth, and the inevitable cutlass brandished in his right hand, he marshals his tattered troop with matchless dignity. "You, sar, plow yer nose!" he shouts sternly to a luckless youth whose nether garments are somewhat in disorder. How could a hint be more delicately conveyed? To look at him you would not suppose that this stalwart Colliss was what one would call a weakling. Yet he deplores the decay of his powers. "Yes, sar," he sighs, "I wass a giant off sixteen; but I carry de burning charcoal on my head, and she burn off my hafr, and take away my stren'th." Thus dwelling on the glories of his vanished youth, Colliss brings us to the foot of the winding path which will lead us to the crater's edge. The ascent is gentle, and we have no such struggle before us as on the Morne Garu. Shaded all the way by vast forest-trees, with wild begonias growing round our path, we plod steadily upwards for two thousand feet. I had fallen a little behind the rest, and feeling thirsty I called a little negro boy who was dogging my steps after the fashion of his race, and asked him if he could find me some water. "O yes, master," he answers readily. "But I have nothing to put it in." I object. "Never

mind, old master; me bring it in bush;" and he dived down the slope, and disappeared in the thicket. I was wondering what the strange creature could mean, when he emerged again, holding in his hand a sort of bottle extemporized out of two huge leaves, and containing at least a pint of water. How I was to come at the contents of this frail vessel I did not see, and sat staring helplessly at my young benefactor, who gazed at me with equal perplexity. Suddenly his jetty features were lighted up by an idea. "Never mind, old master," he cried again; "me bring anodder bush;" and he dived again. A minute after he reappeared, holding in his hand a tube formed from the section of a bamboo. How he procured it, while both hands were occupied with his bottle of leaves, is a mystery to this day; but there it was, and by its aid I drank my fill of water, and went on my way refreshed.

After my thirst had been thus relieved by an ingenious negro, I rejoined our party, which had halted for rest and refreshment under the shade of a vast fig-tree, known as the Maroon tree in this neighborhood. Colliss is gloating over the flayed corpse of some wretched little animal, which has been slain by his dog. It is the agouti (or *gooty* as he calls it) which, with the manachoo, is the only mammal indigenous to the island. After half an hour's rest we form in single file, Colliss in the van, with the red carcase of his victim dangling at his side. We now pass out of the region of forest-trees, and ascend a steep and narrow path formed of volcanic ash, for we are climbing the cone of the crater, where nothing grows but dwarf palms and bush. Now and then we hear the clear, wild note of the Souffrière bird, a beautiful creature which seems to be found only on this mountain. A puff of

sulphurous air assails our nostrils, the feverish breath of the Titan whose prison-walls we are scaling. The sun beats fiercely on our heads as we strain upwards, and we are not sorry when a joyous shout from our advanced guard announces that we are approaching our goal. Another moment, and we stand on the edge of the crater.

At first all we can see is a whirling mass of mist, eddying like steam in that vast cauldron; but as we look, a deep rent appears in that swaying curtain, and we catch a glimpse of a green and ghastly pool a thousand feet below us. As the wind freshens, the white veil rolls away, and all that gaping chasm lies revealed. The walls of the crater form an irregular circle about three miles in circumference; seen from above they seem to be almost perpendicular, but in reality there is such a considerable slope that a stone hurled from the brink by a strong and practised hand cannot reach the waters of the lake. A strange sight is the livid floor of that dread abyss, ever changing in hue, now green, now black as ebony, and then again so dazzlingly white that it looks like a sheet of ice covered with snow. The sides of the crater are clothed with a dense growth of bush and stunted trees. Here and there a yellow flower, somewhat resembling the daffodil, relieves the general monotony of green. The prevailing impression is one of solemn and awful beauty, and almost unearthly calm. With such loveliness has the healing hand of time clothed that hideous wound which the earth-born monster once tore in his mother's side. The thought inevitably suggests itself, when will that calm be broken? When will that loveliness be marred? Nine years have gone by since we asked that question; and now we have had our answer.

Meanwhile a rolling column of mist has crept silently up the eastern side of the mountain, and begins to descend into that yawning pit. On it sweeps, that cloudy battalion, reaching down with writhing, snaky fingers to greet the spirits of the flood below. Gradually the lake and walls of the crater are hidden from view, and the whole void is filled by the white mist.

We wake from our dream to pursue our march upwards along the wall of the crater, to the little wooden shelter-house where we are to lodge. It is a tiny two-roomed cabin built in a snug recess under a sheltering rock, where the sides of the crater reach their greatest elevation. We have the key, and permission to use the shelter, from the Governor's office in Kingstown. The path rises steeply before us, and it is half an hour before we reach the hut. Here a small difficulty arises; the lock is hampered, and the key will not turn; but one vigorous kick soon disposes of this obstacle, and we enter and take possession. The bearers are paid and dismissed, and after a hasty meal we prepare to take up our quarters for the night. Four of the party are provided with hammocks; I, who abhor that pendulous and uneasy form of couch, go forth to gather a bundle of grass, with which I build a nest for myself on the floor. When all is ready, we gather round the lamp, to smoke a final pipe, and taste a temperate glass. We discuss our plan of campaign, and when that is settled we startle the echoes of the mountain with many a lusty stave. Then, after many final pipes, and one more temperate glass (reader, 'tis a thirsty climate!) we seek our several lairs. One plump and elderly colleague is curled up in his hammock and sleeping like a baby before the rest of us have kicked off our boots. At last the lamp is extinguished, and

our little shed with its five living occupants is wrapped in the great silence of the mountain.

Our little hermitage lies thirty-five hundred feet above sea-level, and at that elevation the climate is sufficiently cool, the thermometer ranging from sixty to seventy degrees. An unwonted feeling of chilliness rouses me at an early hour, and before the others are stirring I steal quietly out to inhale the welcome freshness and enjoy a quiet hour alone. A light mist, already melting before the growing power of the sun, covers the mountain-top, and everything gives promise of a fine day. Something stirs in the bushes which overhang the crater's brink, and I see a gleam as of living emerald. I stand motionless, hardly even breathing lest I startle that shy denizen of the wilderness, whatever it be. And lo! it appears, the good genius of the mountain, in the shape of a tiny humming-bird, with a crest of vivid green, which glances like a living jewel as the exquisite little creature darts rapidly from spray to spray. Presently it settles on the topmost twig, and there remains, unabashed by my presence. Is it fancy, or do I really catch the whispered notes of a tiny song, faint and infinitely low? No, it is not delusion, it is the voice of that lovely little spirit which I hear. For some minutes it continues, and then the voices of my companions are heard from the hut, breaking the silver thread of that fairy song, and recalling me from the thoughts of that gentle vision to the grosser cares of breakfast. The charcoal-pan is filled and lighted, and one of the party, setting it on his head, runs up and down the path, to fan it into a glow. Another stands over the spirit-lamp, busily stirring porridge with a stick. Hammocks are rolled up, my litter is raked into a corner, and when all is

prepared we sit down to our homely board with mountain appetites.

We have hardly finished when a voice is heard outside, and through the open door we see an old white-headed negro, gazing intently into the crater, and muttering to himself "Hi! she no talk at all!" such is the old man's gaint comment as he peers down on the sluggish waters of the lake. The expression is uncouth, but the thought is just, and the poor old fellow has touched the dominant note in that scene,—its awful, and, if I may say so, threatening calm. Curiosity, and perhaps some dim instinct of poetry, has prompted the veteran to visit these wilds, which he has never seen before, though he has lived nearly his whole life in the island. He tells us something of his story. He has been a slave: "Black man make war on black man; take much prisoners, sell dem to white man; white man put prisoners on big ship, two, three, four masts, and sail ober de seas; most ob de prisoners die on de way, trow dem into de sea; me come here, where I lib thirty years as slave." Such is that simple chapter in the dark story of the black man's wrongs and the white man's shame.

It is time to give some more particular description of the vast mountain which we have set ourselves to explore. Our account may gain some interest from the fact that these happy fields, the playground of our holidays, have now vanished for ever. Those scenes of varied beauty and interest are now converted into a burning fiery furnace. When the powers of chaos have spent their rage, a new world will arise on the ruins of the old, with new shapes of loveliness and wonder; but no eye will ever again behold that realm of ours. The great basin on whose edge we were lodging is known as the Old Crater, and was formed at some remote period of

which there is no record. North of this, and divided from it by a narrow and perilous ridge, is the New Crater, smaller in extent, formed by the great eruption of 1812. On the site of the New Crater there once stood a conical hill, as I saw in an old print of the eighteenth century. Behind these, on the north-western side, is a broken region, seamed by innumerable gullies, some of which are of great depth, and closed by a line of precipitous hills, towering three or four hundred feet above the extensive plateau which forms the top of the mountain. Seen from a distance this region has the appearance of a level plain; but he who tries to cross it, choosing what seems the shortest route to the heights beyond, will find himself involved in a labyrinth of gullies deep enough to swallow whole armies. West of the mountain is a black and dreary waste, where the ashes from the last eruption lie piled to an immense depth, channeled in all directions by the violent tropical rains, which have formed deep alleys in the great cinder-bed down which you may wander for miles, at the risk of being whelmed by the fall of the quaking walls of ash towering fifty feet above your head. No green thing grows there; it is the realm of desolation, the very grave of Nature. Emerging thence we come to the last great feature of the Soufrière, a deep gorge through which the molten lava once plunged in a torrent of fire. There it lies now, a frozen, motionless river, with eddies and billows carved in stone.

Our first task is to descend the Old Crater. Provided with ropes, we make our way to the point where the wall is lowest, about eight hundred feet above the lake. One by one we scramble down, easing our descent by the rope in dangerous places, and holding on by the queer little dwarf-palms, which greet us with a shower

of dirty water from their cup-like crown of leaves. The walls drop sheer to the water's edge, leaving no beach. At the bottom we find a rude canoe, or raft, moored to a tree. Above us tower the walls of this vast Colosseum, and opposite, close to the skyline, we can just discern our little cabin. A local legend is connected with this wild spot. The negroes say that a mermaid had made her home in the lake, and lived there with her daughter. Seeing her mother's dominion invaded by the bold, bad man who launched that raft on her waters, the mermaid's daughter died of grief; and a great flood which occurred soon afterwards, causing much havoc and loss of life, was regarded as an act of vengeance on the part of the angry mother for the death of her child. At the risk of provoking a fresh explosion of wrath from the queen of these waters we strip off our clothes and plunge into the Stygian pool. The water is strongly tinged with alum and sulphur, and we emerge with eyes and noses smarting from the acrid solution. Then one adventurous spirit unmoors the crazy little raft, and launches out into the centre of the lake to take soundings. Down goes the lead three hundred feet; the line is run out, and has found no bottom.

On our way back we have a fine view of St. Lucia, with its trim peaks, the Pitons, rising like tall spires two thousand feet, now glowing rosy red in the sunset. When we reach the hut we find that our privacy has been invaded. A burly police-sergeant, attended by a lad, has come up from Château Belair, to enquire into our violent and burglarious proceedings of the day before. We find means to appease the swarthy official; but all our eloquence will not avail to induce him to return by night to Château Belair, for the Souffrière has

an evil name, and even by day is full of ghostly terrors for the negro. The boy, however, is bidden peremptorily to depart, and sets out in the gathering darkness with manifest reluctance. Half an hour afterwards we hear the sound of scampering feet, and a wild figure, with livid countenance and eyes rolling with terror, bursts into the hut, and leans, panting and speechless, against the wall. It is the policeman's boy. When he is able to speak, we gather that, on reaching the corner where the path branches off to the New Crater (he was going to Georgetown, on the windward side), he was met by a duppy (a sort of goblin), who stood in the path, and shouted in a terrible voice: "You cross my path these three times; I break your neck!" Not waiting to hear more the valiant youth turned tail, and ran with headlong speed down the path back to the hut. It would have been cruel, even if it had been possible, to drive the poor wretch out into the darkness again, and he was allowed to stay for the night.

Next morning a babel of voices startles us early from our slumbers, and turning out in a body to learn the cause of the commotion, we find a wild troop of ragged negroes, men, women, and children, camping out on the path close to our quarters. They are Shakers, poor even to destitution, who have tramped the whole length of the island from Kingstown to hold a prayer-meeting on the lone mountain top: No fitter spot could have been chosen to kindle the true spirit of prayer,—the One Finite striving to rend the veil which divides it from the One Infinite. We watch these strange people, grouped in every attitude of religious ecstasy, some standing, some kneeling, stretching out their hands towards the crater, crying and beating their breasts.

The eventful week is drawing to

its close, crowded with wonderful experiences not to be forgotten in a lifetime. It is our last evening, and we are returning from a long day's march which has led us into the remotest recesses of the mountain. Through the winding alleys of that city of ashes we take our way. No sign of life have we met in that home of desolation, save a huge black snake lying torpid in our path, having supped, apparently, on a near relation whose head was still protruding from the open jaws of his destroyer. A fit scene for that cannibal banquet! The sun is just kissing the red lips of the crater with his parting beams, and the mist gathers fast at our heels, as we come out into the wild,

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moor-like tract, through which we must pass to reach our hut: At this moment our ears are greeted by a clear, sweet note, and we pause in wonder to learn the source of that glorious song. Perched on the topmost spray of a solitary tree is seen the gay form of a Souffrière bird, pouring out all his heart in liquid music. Unscared by our presence he sings on; it is not unlikely that ours are the first human faces he has ever seen, and that experience has never taught him the fear of man. We turn away at last, but our steps are still followed by the chant of that lone singer, filling the wilderness with melody.

H. L. Havell.

THE WINDS OF CATHRIGG.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE MURMURING OF INNUMERABLE BEES.

The sympathetic modern father does not oppose an only child with comfort or satisfaction. David Elsworthy passed many unhappy hours in wondering whether he was doing rightly by his Elsie. How little he could have expected a year ago that such possibilities should come into her quiet life! How peacefully the six months of "Charles Cross's" presence had passed by! The present assistant was a worthy youth who did his best in every way, but who regarded his working hours as interruptions to his bicycle and his cricket, and whose joy was his smart Sunday tie and gloves.

As for Elsie, though life was strenuous and subject to periods of depression and alarm, she was not so much

to be pitied. She had plenty to live for, and it was not difficult for her to be, as her aunt and father said, "very good."

She took her place and kept her counsel amidst the summer gaieties of Ashenhead with a gentle little dignity peculiarly her own, and no one seeing or hearing her would have guessed what sharp alternatives were placed before her.

Ashenhead was a pleasant place in summer, and so Edward Mason thought as he walked down the hill through the broad High Street, noted the green meadows and low hills beyond, and the fresh, clear river sparkling in the sunlight. As he came towards River Street, his eye fell on a figure quite unmistakable to a Marsdale eye—namely, that of a rough, long-bodied, pepper-and-salt dog, trotting along the pavement in company with

a young lady whom Edward at once recognized. Elsie was dressed in pale lilac, everything she wore was fresh and neat and quiet; she moved gracefully, her little straw hat rested in a becoming curve on her pretty brown hair. Although she was dressed in the ordinary style of the moment, a certain inheritance of Quaker modesty and reserve distinguished her.

"I always liked her looks," thought Edward; "she does not look like a fashion-plate as most girls do."

At that moment Elsie crossed the road and called distinctly and gently:

"Quince! Quince!"

"Miss Elsworthy," said Edward, stopping and bowing, "how d'you do? I can't mistake Quince. A very good dog he is, too."

Elsie blushed intensely, but she kept her composure and held out her hand.

Edward felt that he did not know exactly how to account for himself, but Elsie solved the difficulty by saying simply:

"Did you come to see my father? He is away on business, but I expect him back in an hour or so."

"I came to see your father—and you too, Miss Elsworthy. Caradoc asked me to come."

"Will you come in and wait?" said Elsie, self-possessed still, though her nerves tingled. "Here is the Museum, and here," she added, perhaps purposely, "is my father's shop. He will like to show you his old books and some of the curiosities. My aunt will be in, I think, directly. Would you like to sit in the garden?"

She led the way as she spoke into the long back garden in all the glory of white pinks, sweet williams, Canterbury bells, and early roses.

There were some chairs under an acacia tree, which was just putting out lovely shell-pink tassels, unusual so far north, but the garden was sheltered.

Edward said all that was polite, as he sat down, but he did not quite know what line to take, till Elsie said:

"I hope Viola is well, Mr. Mason. We were a great deal together after I met you at Beachcombe."

"Oh yes, I know," said Edward, starting into attention. "Viola is well, I believe. She—she seemed to have grown more used to Beachcombe when I saw her there the other day. She talked a great deal of you. Crad and I were so glad she had made friends with you."

This, of course, was not exactly what Edward had come to Ashenhead to say.

"We are friends," said Elsie earnestly.

"Yes. She hadn't any friends in Marsdale. But now you see, Miss Elsworthy, things are very much changed. Viola will, I suppose, be taken out and see all sorts of people. My mother wants her to have more advantages, and her aunts think her likely to be admired."

"Don't you think so?" said Elsie.

"Oh yes—yes," said Ned, "of course I do. She was admired at Beachcombe—wasn't she? You were there at that—that—that very smart bazaar."

His voice sounded as if a different epithet had been on the tip of his tongue. "I mean when Winterton was there buying cushions and things."

"Yes," said Elsie, "Mr. Winterton's feelings were very profitable to the bazaar. I was not surprised at what happened. And now Viola tells me he is coming back to England."

"Ah! She—she would be glad of that, no doubt? She probably made a mistake in sending him away? You see, Miss Elsworthy, both Crad and I feel that VI, not exactly belonging either to her aunts or now to my mother, is very much alone. That

was why we were so glad she had a friend in you."

Elsie, to whom Edward's feelings had always been visible, smiled a little as she answered: "I think Viola does want all the friends she has. She is not like most girls of twenty; she has hardly grown up. I think it would be a great pity if she made a mistake again, from not quite knowing what she was about."

"How—how?" said Edward eagerly. "A mistake again? In refusing or accepting Winterton?"

"That I don't quite know," said Elsie. "She is ashamed at not having behaved well to him. And I think she ought to know all the alternatives that she may have before her."

"All?"

"Yes. That she may judge fairly. She likes the best things really, if she knows that they exist."

"Miss Elsworthy, I can't misunderstand you. I suppose you—I am sure you are very discerning—I suppose you guessed my secret at Beachcombe. You know what she is to me. But you know how she has grown up to regard me. And now, just when I felt free to speak, this change of fortune for them gives her such new possibilities—"

"I think she ought to know—anything there is," said Elsie. "It is a mistake, I think, generally to keep things secret."

Edward sat silent for a moment or two, digging holes in the turf with his walking stick, then he suddenly looked up with a start.

"Thank you for your words and thoughts, Miss Elsworthy. But of course I did not come to talk about myself. I am here at Caradoc's request, as he tells me very untrue rumors have reached his friends here. I want to find out where they started from."

"Neither my father nor I believe in the rumors," said Elsie.

"I am in Caradoc's confidence, Miss Elsworthy, and I think you like straightforwardness."

"Yes," murmured Elsie, "I believe in that."

"Crad says he was happier here than he has ever been in his life, and I see how immensely he is improved and developed. Now, of course, he has a very different future before him from what we feared. I think I should like to tell you a little about him. It's not, of course, what I came to do. That is to discover the source of all this tittle-tattle. But I should like to say just a little."

"I should like to hear it," she replied.

"Well," said Edward. "It resolves itself pretty much into this. Crad is not a genius, or a poet; he never wrote a verse in his life, nor any prose either that I know of. But he has the romantic nature in him, and his attachment to Agnes Fletcher was of the stuff that dreams—and fools—and poets are made of. She's a beautiful girl and very good. But it was a sort of fever in his life and fit for your ears. He has told you?"

"Yes, I quite understand it."

"Yes. Well, it is over. She always knew better. He was very foolish and violent, of course, afterwards. But don't think for one moment that it's not all at an end. And mind this, if Caradoc tells you so, it's perfectly true. I know, for I've lived with them all. No one of the three ever told a lie. They can't. Then he was on wretched terms with his father. They parted, as you know, with violence on both sides. And, alas! they never spoke to each other again. He fell before the poor boy reached him. No one saw it happen. You know how stories and mysteries grow up, and the notion that his neighbors suspect something more is agonizing to Crad, though it is the merest tittle-tattle."

"I know. I entirely trust him," said Elsie.

She went on speaking with great effort, and with a still greater she looked at Edward as she spoke.

"We do not believe the rumors, but my father thinks Sir Caradoc ought to test his own feelings because the circumstances are so unusual. And I feel that I want him to show every one that he knows his own wishes. While he was here he could not feel with his home self, and since, so much, so very much has happened. And I should suppose that in the kind of society to which he will now belong I should not seem much more his equal than Agnes Fletcher. Perhaps, from what I have read and noticed, they would like me even less. So I will never have it said that we took advantage of his having been here with us. That shan't be said of me. And it shall never be said of him that he did not come to me of his own will, after knowing about other people. So that I have resolved that I will not be engaged to him for a year from now. Then, if he will, he may come back. He knows——"

She could not continue and held herself still with a great effort.

As Edward met her look, at once innocent and strong, and listened to her, and listened to the refined and thoughtful view which she expressed with a completeness that had a certain formality, he felt that she was indeed unlike the average product of up-to-date society. She spoke as if she had been sending her knight out to prove himself, and her comprehension of the situation, and her sense also of what was due to her own dignity, struck him exceedingly.

"Yet," he said, "you advise me to defy all these considerations."

"That is different," said Elsie, "and—and I only wanted Viola to know. He—he—he knows——"

She started up blushing exceedingly and walking away began to gather some pinks, and if Edward had thought that her scruples showed any want of feeling he was now reassured.

She came back in a minute, holding out the pinks and murmuring something about their sweet smell, and then Edward said in a lighter tone:

"I think I quite understand you, Miss Elsworthy, and agree with you, and admire you. But now, I came to see if I could trace the scandals. Can you help me? I gather that they have reached Northborough."

"Yes," said Elsie. "I don't know exactly how my father heard of them, or if he would tell you. But I really don't think there is any harm in my saying that I heard of them from a girl friend, who has relations there. And, dear me! here she is! She sometimes comes to tea with me."

Quince barked as Elsie spoke, and a young lady, who looked like a fashion plate, appeared at the house door.

"Good heavens!" thought Edward, as Elsie introduced Miss Manvers; "suppose Crad had fallen in love with her!"

Mattie Manvers, who had thought at first that she had surprised Elsie with Caradoc, was much edified at finding another strange young man in River Street, and looked arch and curious as the maid brought out some tea and some general remarks passed on the weather, and the flowers, and on the charms of Quince, who, by the way, disliked Mattie so much as to be far from charming to her.

Presently, however, Elsie said composedly:

"Mattie, Mr. Mason has come from Sir Caradoc Crosby to inquire about all that foolish talk you once repeated to me. My father heard it, and it has been mentioned to Sir Caradoc. Per-

haps you would not mind saying where you heard it."

"I—I don't think I quite remember, dear Elsie," said Mattie, looking rather frightened.

"My step-brother, Sir Caradoc Crosby," said Edward, "has asked me to try to trace out some rumors to his discredit. They don't appear to me of much consequence, but he does not wish any friends whom he made while at Ashenhead to be annoyed by them. He intends, you know, now that he has come in to so considerable a fortune, to put Cathrigg Hall into entire repair and live in the neighborhood, and I advised him to take the trouble to contradict any misapprehensions."

"Oh!" cried Mattie. "I—I am quite sure it was all nonsense. Of course, now we know Sir Caradoc Crosby is such a very different sort of person it would be quite impossible! I told Elsie in confidence."

"No, Mattie, I don't think you did," said Elsie. "You told me every one in Northborough and Ashby was talking about it."

"The only thing worth referring to," said Edward, "is that I understand that it has been said that my brother made incorrect statements before the coroner as to the manner of his father's death. That, as of course you know, Miss Manvers, would be a libel."

"Oh but, Mr. Mason, I didn't say that. I said people thought it strange, and girls can't make a libel."

"Oh yes, they can. You see, as no one but Sir Caradoc Crosby was present at the time, there can be no evidence but his own. And to accuse any one of false swearing without evidence is a libel, undoubtedly."

"Oh, I don't believe it one bit now, Mr. Mason. You know," very sweetly, "us girls—we do chatter. Gentle-men mustn't be too hard on us!"

Whatever Edward might have seen

fit to say was interrupted by the entrance of Miss Sophia, who was duly introduced to Edward, who explained the occasion of his appearance there.

"I've been telling Mr. Mason it's all so different now," said Mattie.

"That is so," said Miss Sophia. "Thee sees, friend Edward Mason, that Caradoc Crosby by using a name not his own gave some occasion for talk. Nor were people afraid to talk of a youth in trouble. That is the way of the world. But I think thee will find that no one will take away the character of a person of consequence who is rich also. And I should advise thee and him to say no more, as there is no evidence at all about it. We in this house thought well of the young man from the first, and we think so still. But, thee knows, people love to have something to say."

"There is a great deal in what you say, Miss Elsworthy," said Edward. "I came to find out if these rumors were worth noticing."

"Thee can consult my brother David," said Miss Elsworthy, "and there he comes."

Edward rose, and Elsie went forward to introduce him to her father, who after a word or two took him into the house for a freer conversation. Mattie burst out:

"Oh dear me, Elsie! I never would have said a word, or believed a word if I'd known. Not that I did believe it, but of course it's all so different. And one knows gentlemen of rank and fortune will be rather wild. I've so often read of it. And Elsie, you'll forgive me, though you ought not to have told of me, and when you're Lady Crosby and live in a lovely house, and have house parties, and hunt breakfasts and balls, and play cards in the daytime, and wear tea-gowns at afternoon tea, instead of only for small parties in the evening, you'll ask me to stay, won't you? I should love it."

"Thee knows best, Mattie," said Miss Sophia, "why thee repeated idle tales to Elsie; but thy tongue is running much too fast now. Thee should learn to guide it better."

"Don't talk any more nonsense, Mattie," said Elsie. "Had you anything particular to say to me this afternoon?"

"Oh yes," said Mattie, subdued. "I came to talk about the Sunday-school treat. Do you think Florrie Kitson ought to go? She hardly ever comes to school, and I've seen her walking with a young man instead. But I don't want to be hard on her." And on this new topic Mattie proceeded to talk with a degree of good sense not indicated by her former conversation.

In the meantime Edward Mason and Mr. Elsworthy, conceiving a hearty liking for each other, agreed that the talk about Agnes Fletcher must be left to die away of itself, but that a visit to Mr. Hoxton at Northborough might be desirable to show that Sir Caradoc Crosby was aware of the possibility of libellous talk about the manner of his father's death and would not sit down quietly under it.

But all depended on Caradoc's own behavior. He had his name to make, and his future to secure.

CHAPTER XXXII.

FORECASTS.

Agnes Wilson got a lift in the cart of the "vet." who was going to Marsdale to see a sick cow, and being set down at the foot of the Scunner Head she soon climbed the big shoulder of the mountain and passed over into Swarthdale, presenting herself in the kitchen of Swarth Ghyll farm at a still early hour.

"Eh, Aggie, woman! What's brought you back?" cried her mother, turning round from her oven.

"I've come back, mother, because I understand as Matthew has spoken

light of me, as he never would have done if Joe were here to tell him on't."

"Matthew! What d'ye say, lass?"

"'Tis said that I've been letting Sir Caradoc come after me again, since my man was taken. 'Tis a shame to gi' a young man an ill name, but 'tis my good name I'm concerned wi'—and I'll not put up wi' false tales of me."

"But why dost 'ee lay it on Mat?"

"If it's not Mat as said it, he's my brother, and he's bound to contradict it!"

Agnes was the best educated as well as the strongest character of the family. She was quiet and self-contained, and never flew out, as her father and brothers sometimes did, nor cried, as Matthew's wife, Becca, was given to do when she could not get her way; but she was a power in the family from her determination and way of going straight to the point. She waited till the approach of dinner-time brought in her father and elder brother, who exclaimed at sight of her, when her mother said:

"Aggie has heard that ye wouldna let Jem go to Cathrigg, and that tales have been put about of hersel' and young Sir Caradoc. Ye're bound to tell her, Mat, what's set you on thinking ill of her."

Matthew Fletcher, a big, dark man, as handsome as Agnes herself, but with a sullen, rather stupid face, deposed that he did not forget Sir Caradoc's conduct at the wedding, and that he had himself seen Agnes talking to him and had heard other folks speak of it.

"And what for no'?" said Agnes, standing straight up and speaking out firmly. "When was the day that I would not have spoken with Mr. Crad, or Mr. Quentin, or Miss Vi? Mr. Crad was foolish, as lads will be, but he meant me no ill, nor did none. And if I'd been minded to wed him, as he asked me honest and straight, I wouldna ha' shamed him, nor any of you. But I'd walked wi' Joe ever sin I were a lass

o' fifteen, as ye mind well. Mr. Crad has begged my pardon for his conduct on our wedding-day, and now he's meaning to wed a young lady he's come to know. And I have wished him and her well with all my heart. And ye're doing me an ill turn by casting it up to him."

"She's in the right," said the father. "Mr. Crad—Sir Caradoc, I should say, has asked her pardon and there's nowt to say."

"What'd ye have, Aggie?" said Mat sulcily.

"I'd have mother take Jem to Cathrigg, and say as father'd turned it over in's mind if Maister Mitchell's place is open," said the inexorable Agnes; "and Jem mun do's best, it's a rare chance for a laddie."

"There be them," muttered Matthew, "that say there were none to see how owd Sir C'radoc came by's end."

"An' ye'd better not be one on 'em," said Agnes flashing round at him, "for none can say but young Sir C'radoc and the Lord above, as he called on to witness his words afore t' Crowner."

"Ay, ay, Mat," said the father. "It's ill meddling with Crowner's law. And Crosbys is men o' their word, when all's said. There's Quince, poor owd lad--owd Quince, 'gin he sells one on yon dogs o' his'n, he'll point out's failings and defects before he drives a bargain. Na! na! Sir C'radoc's self ne'er mended 's gates wi' rotten wood painted o'er!"

Agnes thus got her way in the family conclave. When it was all over she cried a little, and eased her mind by telling her mother that she hated the "Green Man" and her work there, and that she'd sooner wash the stones and feed the calves at Swarth Ghyll, but live with Becca she wouldn't. 'Twas Becca that put notions into Mat's head, and, as she put it, had flung Mr. Crad in her face.

She had to go back to the "Green

Man," however, for the present, and on her way she chose to visit a person who had shown her but little good-will—namely, Mrs. Penaluna at Greenhead Howe. Biddums, enchanted with her new silk gown, and full of delighted pride in the hopes of her "chill'en," as she called Caradoc and Viola, was inclined to be friendly. Agnes' affairs belonged to the far past, and everything was different now.

She received the late sitting of eggs, with which Agnes had provided herself, graciously, invited her to a cup of tea and a hot tea-cake, and was soon dilating on the happy future in store for Marsdale.

"Law, my dear soul," she said, "that there Hydro. would never have got along here. We'd have ill-wished un till he'd dried up and withered away. I seed him, in his shiny hat and coat, a counter-jumping fellow."

This confusion of the Hydro. with its representative, Mr. Boswell, and the consequent anthropomorphic presentation of it in his person, passed unnoticed by Agnes.

"It would ha' been strange to see the Hydro.," she said. "And how is Mr. Quince keeping?"

"Mr. Quince is enjoying of a val'able book as Sir C'radoc have brought him. 'Uncle,' says he, 'here's something to amuse you in bad weather.' And master, he do pat it as if 'twas a puppy. Ah! my poor master 'll have a peaceful end now."

"Peaceful end, Mrs. Penaluna? Why, sure there's nought amiss wi' Mr. Quince?"

"No," said Biddums, shaking her head, "but he've had a hard life, Mrs. Wilson, and he've come to the time to feel it. And so, you're over to Ashby to your auntie at the 'Green Man.' Think 'e'll stop there?"

"For a while," said Agnes, "but you've heard maybe that Joe's elder brother is in New Zealand. I've had

a thought of going to him. Joe and me we'd thought it over. And as they said 'twas the women they wanted most, if I get a kindly answer to the letter I've wrote I'll maybe go after all."

"Why, there's mighty good wages to be got out there, I'm told," said Biddums, who was a person who kept her ears open, "and women are scarce and precious too!"

"I thought I might maybe help some lady with children going out and get a free passage, but 'tis far from home."

"Yes, sure," said Biddums. "If there's chill'en, home comes with 'em. Law, 'twas like a foreign country when us come here from Falmouth. But I'm at home where all my chill'en was born, my dear, and I'll be buried beside 'em."

Agnes looked at her with some surprise. The self-forgetting love which had made this "barren woman a joyful mother of children" not her own was a little strange to the younger woman to whom the tie of faithful service appealed less strongly. She felt lonely and she had detected a certain satisfaction in Mrs. Penaluna's receipt of her words.

Biddums, however, was kind. She entered into a long talk on the merits and sufferings of the lost Joe, and heartily agreed that Swarth Ghyll gave Agnes no room as things were at present.

"Law, my dear soul," she said, as she wished her good-bye, "you're not called on to be in a hurry. You set and think it over. There's a many as'll want to have a voice in the matter. And look'ee here, my dear, eddicate yourself a bit. It don't matter for an old woman like me, but times is changed and the school here at Marsdale ain't up to nothing. If you're going over seas you'll want eddication."

Agnes was not a bookish person, though her aunt had given her a year's schooling at Ashby. She cared little for books.

"Why, Mrs. Penaluna," she said, "I didn't know you set so much store by being a scholar."

"Bless your heart!" said Biddums, "I ain't no scholar; I left school when I was ten year old. But I'd a got some larnin' if I'd come into the world nowadays. 'Taint true as larnin' makes bad servants or bad wives: 'tis idleness and empty heads makes maids good for nothing. This here Lizzie as I've got here now, 'tis frizzing of her hair, and counting of her steps for fear she'd take one too many, that makes her an idle slut. She don't waste her time casting up figures or studying her books. But there, I must be stirring. Master'll be coming into his dinner. That there's Jem barking. I'd have known him out in New Zealand."

Agnes took her leave, having ascertained that no suspicion of herself existed in the mind of Mrs. Penaluna, who evidently knew of no reports to the young baronet's discredit.

No bird of the air had carried the matter to Greenhead Howe, and whatever whispers the winds of Cathrigg blew round about, it rested much with Caradoc himself whether the whispers should become audible.

This, at least, without metaphor, was pretty much what Edward Mason said to him when they met at Cathrigg Hall after Edward's visit to Ashenhead.

"There's nothing to take hold of," he said. "It's little but a sort of simulacrum; a reflection of old ideas. Of course you might take a run abroad for an indefinite period and let it all die out."

"I'll be shot if I do!" said Caradoc.

"Or you may stay here and show people for yourself what you're made of."

"That is what I mean to do," said Caradoc. "I've made the music, I'll face it."

"When I say stay here, of course I don't mean constantly. You should go

to town and of course there'll be visits."

"That sort of thing can keep," said Caradoc. "At any rate I'll wait till I'm asked. No!" he stood up and spoke emphatically. "I owe it to the lady I hope to marry to show that I can live here and give rise to no comments. And," dropping into a simpler tone, "you see, there's nothing I can do for my father, no way I can make up to him so good as setting this place and our name on their legs again. I must live down my own record and his."

It was a fine thought, if uttered with the audaciousness of sanguine youth.

"I couldn't give myself up, Ned, when she trusts me," he added, "and God knows I don't look lightly at what's behind me."

"I'm sure you don't, Crad. You'll do, I'm certain," said Edward, warmly.

"But talking of visits," said Crad, sitting down again and speaking in a lighter tone. "I've had a long letter from the aunts. They want to take Vi into Cornwall on a round of visits among her friends and connections. They've considered the matter, they say, about Winterton who is coming home, and they think Vi had better not be made to feel that she has to make up her mind at once. They know all the best people, you see, of a quiet sort. I don't suppose they'd be smart houses exactly."

"Heaven forbid!" ejaculated Edward, and then checking himself: "But of course, I forgot, she ought to have every opportunity," repeating this shibboleth in a melancholy voice.

"Well, she can't go out in London this year, though they say they have plans, 'if necessary,' for next season. Aunt Bessie says she always meant to take her among old family friends, and that now it is more than ever desirable."

"Yes," said Edward.

"Then the mother writes that she

quite approves, for nothing can be done down here at present. You see, Ned, I mean, when this place is set to rights, by-and-by, when the mother can go out properly, that she shall come and open Cathrigg Hall to the neighbors. She shall be mistress here before I marry, for, Ned, I've found out what we owe her, what she did for us. And I'll show that I know it."

"Crad," said Edward suddenly, "if, when she has seen the world, and had her opportunities, and if she doesn't care for Winterton, will you give Vi to me? There! it's out! Your Elsie guessed it somehow, and told me I ought to speak. It's nothing new. I've always—worshipped her."

"You? Vi?" ejaculated Caradoc, extremely astonished. "Was that why she wouldn't have Winterton?"

"Crad! Is it possible? Do you think so?" cried Edward, blazing up into excitement such as Crad had never known in him. "But no—she knows nothing about it. But on the principle of being square and above board, I thought you ought to know. I think you'd better not say anything now. Only if the way lies open, I mean to try, and if I fail, I think you know that I'm man enough not to let anything be disturbed by it."

"Well," said Crad reflectively, "I suppose Vi is very handsome."

"I can't conceive how you can ever have failed to be aware of it."

"I thought we were all just alike," said Crad. "Poor Quentin was a fine-looking chap certainly. Well, Ned," the young head of the house concluded, "of course I shan't stand in your light, and I mean Vi to be properly provided for. But I don't think somehow that the aunts will favor you."

"I know they won't. But now I feel free to do the best I can. By all means let her go on the visits. Then she won't feel she ought to accept Winterton."

"I think the aunts will run him as

their candidate in the end, unless some great swell cuts him out," said Crad, "but Vi will have her own say in the matter. But you haven't told me half what you did at Ashenhead."

The Sunday Magazine.

And with this fruitful and interminable subject in hand, the rest of the evening passed, for Crad at least, very happily.

Christabel Coleridge.

(To be continued.)

CONCERNING HERBS AND BEASTS.

An ancient book, bound in brown leather and tooled with care: a book now worm-eaten and fallen from its high estate. *Speculum Mundi* it is called, "being a serious discourse of the causes, continuances and qualities of things in nature," printed Anno Dom. 1643 by Roger Daniel, Printer to the Universitie of Cambridge, and dedicated to the Duke of Richmond of the day, Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, to whom the author "by continuing the Dedication of this unworthie work wishes the continual increase of his Grace's renown upon Earth and Happiness in Heaven hereafter."

Erstwhile, without doubt, a precious book, much conned and considered by the Welsh squire who owned it. Notes written in an ink now pale brown with age adorn its margins, and here and there are crosses marked with vehement pen, as though to emphasize the truth of the words set down. Mighty pins, whose heads and points are fearful to look on, hold the yellow age-stained leaves together, and within, upon the cover of the book, is written in the sharp and stilted hand of other days, the owner's name:

John Wynne, hys Booke
God gave him Grace thier on to Looke.

It is another John, one surnamed Swan, who writes the book; and, being an old fellow of a determined and whimsical personality, he thus proceeds

to introduce himself and the purport of his work to his Gentle Reader: "Although I go not about to teach the learned, yet the ignorant may be instructed in what before they knew not; yea, the learned may also be occasioned to call to mind something which for the present has either slipt or slept their memories." And lest any man should dare to doubt these facts that he would tell, he states also that "though I be no Stoick to tie God's mightie hand to second causes, yet I verily believe that all things are not beyond the course of nature which seem to be extraordinarie."

Therefore, oh Gentle Readers, be ye learned or be ye ignorant, in all good faith and in exceeding penitence for your foolishness in allowing these strange facts to have slipt or slept your memories, take heed I pray you all these extraordinarie things, which good Master John Swan would have you know, concerning the Heavens above and the earth beneath and the waters under the earth! Much has he to tell of clouds and mists, of flying dragons and of the men and women of the sea; strange tales of birds and beasts and fishes and of the magic power of precious stones, and vastly is he concerned with the strange properties of herbs and plants, and of them does he at great length discourse. He speaks also of astrologie and of the terrible accidents that do succeed eclipses: of

the political significance of comets: of how, that children born at the turn of the new moon, do seldom live; how wood cut for timber before the moon is full, will soon be rotten; and of how the brains of mice do wax and wane, with the waxing and waning of the moon, being ever less when the light of that horned lamp is furthest from the full. Soundly he rates they who do not agree with him in his belief.

Senseless is he who (without blush)
denies
What to sound senses most apparent
lies,
And such is he that doth affirm the
starres
To have no force on their inferiours.

And now, having reduced thee, Gentle Reader, from senselessness unto a proper and reasonable frame of mind, John Swan proceeds to act the part of showman to the universe, as it appeared to him in the days when Charles the First was King. For thee, he bids the seasons wander by, and in very charming language does he introduce the four moving Spirits of his most pleasant comedy.

First appeareth Spring—"that pitiful and kind-hearted Cherisher, clothing the earth with sweet new liveries. Around her head the choristers of the rebounding woods do then begin to tune their sugared throats, bidding good morning to the day, and morrow to the morn. . . . Next cometh Summer, Mother of plentie, and daughter of bountie. Yellow, as gilded ears, her hair, and her lap full of every kind of graine, to enrich the weary laborer and feed each hungry soul. . . . And then that kind-hearted prodigal, Autumne, who giveth away so freely, that in conclusion there is nothing left him. . . . Look after that at Winter, who cometh in with palseie pace, through the gloomie mists of night. Old and hoarie-headed, he doth but shake his hairs, and trees

and herbs, instead of leaves, are periwigged with snow. . . ."

Mention is also made of a certain spirit, who must be of a retiring nature, since his reputation is slight and he is known to few. Yet is his task one not to be despised. He may be described as the Heaving Angel, and he is responsible "for the ebbes and flouds which keep such regular alteration as they do day by day. . . . He stands in a certain place of the world, and sometimes heaves up the earth above the waters, sometimes constraining it to sink below them. In an ebbe, he heaves it up; and in a floud he lets it sink."

But alas for the Heaving Angel! His renown is but short-lived and evanescent, for John Swan, though he gratuitously drags him forth from obscurity into the glare of publicity, pushes him aside contemptuously, as but "the Mad Phancie" of some unknown poet, and so dismisses him and passes on!

Having thus peopled his stage according to his liking, listen while he tells of the "Herbs hot and drie and moist and cold, and of Herbs of more than ordinarie properties"—and lest ye should dare to under-rate their value take to heart the following verse:

Good Lord how many gaping souls
have scap't
By th' aid of herbs, for whom the grave
have gap't;
'Tis not alone their liquor inlie tane
That oft defends us from so many a
bane,
But even their savour, yea their neigh-
bourhood
For some diseases is exceeding good.

"First," he says, "I began with *Basil*, whose seeds being mixed with shoe-maker's black, do take away warts. We in England, though we seldom eat it, yet greatly do esteem it because it smelleth sweet and comforteth the brain. But know that weak brains are rather helped than holpen by it; for the savor is strong, and therefore much

smelled into procurath the heedach; and hath a strong propertie beyond all these, for a certain Italian, by often smelling the *Basil*, had a Scorpion, bred in his brain, and after vehement and long pain he died thereof. I pray thee, Gentle Reader, bear in mind this tragic tale and have a care, lest thou, through over-indulgence in one sweet smell, should turn thy brain into the unwilling hostelry of a too lively Scorpion! Be discreet in thy generation, and setting on one side the pot of treacherous *Basil*, gather to thyself great armsful of *Never-dying Borage* (so called because of its fair blew flowers, ripe seeds and buds may all be seen on it at once) and bravely plunge it into wine, where," saith Master Swan, "it cannot but be good and comfortable and pleasant for the brain and heart; it increaseth wit and memorie, engendereth good blood, maketh a man merrie and joyfull and putteth away all melancholie and madness." Gather also the *Purple Mallow* for 'tis a mitigatour of pain; and if thou stampest the leaves with honey and anointest thyself therewith never more shalt thou be stung or molested by wasps, or any of their kind. *Sage* also take, for "it hath many virtues and a great desire to make a man immortall."

Sage makes the sinews strong, the palsie cures,
And by its help no ague long endures.

A little vinegar sprinkled upon its leaves lying upon coals, and so wrapped in a linnen, and holden very hot unto the side of those that are troubled with a grievous pain, taketh away the pain presently, and also greatly helpeth the extremitie of a pleuresie.

Wild Rue is an enemy to the toad, and therefore a great enemy to Poyson; and if any do eat fasting twenty leaves of *Rue*, two drie wall *Nuts*, as many *Figs*, with one graine of *Salt*, nothing that is venomous shall that

day hurt him: it being also an excellent preservative against the pestilence.

Garlick, Rue, Pears and Radishes will make,

With Triacle and Nut

An antidote which will fell Poyson stake

And doore of danger shut.

Hard indeed is it to imagine any Poyson which would not be overcome by such decoction, whatever might be the fate of the luckless patient! Indeed, 'tis an open question whether John Swan's faith in the efficacy of all his remedies is altogether as supreme as he would have the world believe, for thus writes he later, in a moment of candor, of another of his own medicines:

"This syrupe while 'tis good for rheums, and the fore-named maladies, while some of it cures, others it maketh worse. For we see that the use is too frequently turned into an abuse, and the remedie is proved a disease, and all through a wanton and immoderate use." . . . Comment here were vain!

More pleasant to the ear, eye, and to the taste would be:

Fernell, Vervine, Rose Celandine and Rue

Do water make which will the sight renew,

and "put in a man's eyes will open their windows and let in more light."

And yet more charming this Conserve which is good to comfort the head and heart. "Take the buds of red *Roses*, somewhat before they are ready to spread, cut the red part of the leaves from the white, shake out the yellow seeds, then take the red leaves and beat them very small in a stone mortar, and unto every ounce of *Roses* put three ounces of sugar, by little and little, in the time of the beating, and beat them all together till they be perfectly incorporated. Then put it in a

glasse, and set it in the sunne for a season and it is made."

Gentle Reader, art thou a Damsel, loveless, forlorn, never courted or beloved by mortal man, or art thou some luckless Swain, whose lady-love has played thee false—whiche'er thou art, go gather, secretly, at break of day, some of the herb called *Sowbread*. Reck not its ill-sounding name, but make it into little flat cakes and these take inwardly. So shall all men and women love thee greatly and the world be at thy feet! A simple remedie this, to achieve so great an end. Disdain it not, I pray, because of its simplicity!

Again I ask, art thou ever peevish and childishly foolish for thou knowest not what? Then, says Master Swan, take to thyself the berries of an herb called *Herb-True-Love*, crush them to a powder, and drink of it half a spoonful morn and night. Which thing is not an allegory, but a sober serious fact! Know too, that *Thyme* being made into a powder is good for such as be fearfull and melancholie and troubled in mind, if it be taken in a honied vinegar which is called *Oxmel*. If still thy temper continues dull and melancholle, yielding not to the sweet influence of *Thyme*, for thee grows the flowers of *Rosemarie*. These shalt thou also stamp into a powder and bind them to thy right arm in a linnen cloth and this powder (by working upon the veins) shall make thee right merrie and light-some.

Or does it chance that thou art a wretched wight who liest awake in the long watches of the night, calling in vain for sleep? Arise out of thy bed and make to thyself a garland of *Vervin* and set it on thy throbbing brows; thus crowned, sleep shall be thine, sound and secure!

Is thy friend exceeding sick and sorrie and like to die? Go thou into the garden in the early dawn, and break great boughs off the *Willow-tree*—"These

with their leaves may well be brought into the room, and set about the beds of them that are sick, for they mightly cool the heat of the aire and so cannot but be wonderfull refreshing to the sick patient." Pause not to consider the feelings of the modern doctor, who, armed with clinical thermometer, and scientific saws, cometh in to find his patient's bed decked out with great branches of the *Willow-tree*—for such way cowardice lies! And I beg of thee worry not thy mind as to any disinfectants he may bid thee adopt, chew rather while yet fasting the leaves of the *Sorrel*, or the root of *Angelica*, and thou wilt find that it preserveth wonderfully.

Contagious aire, ingendering pestilence,
Infects not those who in their mouths
have tane
Angelica, that happie counter bane.

Dimly at times does one suspect in worthy Master John a trace of cynical humor which he would fain disguise. Mustard, he says, is marvellous good for the voice of she who would sing clear, but it hath moreover another good propertie which must not be forgotten; and this it is:

She that hath hap a husband bad to
burie
And is therefore in heart no sad but
merrie
Yet if in shew good manners she would
keep
Onyons and Mustard seed will make
her weep.

A good propertie—mark that!

Is not the same quizzing spirit his, when he writes, with scarcely a dividing note of punctuation, "*White Brionie* boiled in oil scoureth the skin and taketh away from a fair damsel's face all wrinkles, freckles and scarres, making her exceeding fair to look upon, 'tis also a plant profitable for tanners to thicken their leather hides with."

Hyssop is an herb which farre above
all the rest
Gives a good colour and complexion
mends,
And is therefore with women in request.

So too are *Cummin seeds*. "Wash with the seeds sodden in water, and thou shalt have thy heart's desire, yet use it not too much for then it breedeth palenesse."

That John Swan was no friend to *Tobacco* may be surmised from his exceeding churlish references to the fragrant weed. "The physical and chirurgicall uses are not a few," he says, "and being taken in a pipe it helpeth aches in any part of the body. But beware of cold after it; neither take it wantonly nor immoderately;" and here follows a poem which he entitles:

"A LESSON FOR SWEARING, SWILLING SWAGGERERS."

To quaffe, roar, swear, and drink Tobacco well,
Is fit for such as pledge sick healths in hell,
Where wanting wine and ale and beer to drink,
Their cups are filled with smoke and fire and fumes and stink.

The gentleman does not mince his words. Almost one might suspect him of wishing in this guise, to gibbet some forward friend who has dared pollute his house with the hated fumes! Of a surety, we here get a side-light on the human nature of the writer!

But to continue. "The leaves of *Waterpepper* rubbed upon a tired jade's back, and a good handful or two laid under the saddle, doth wonderfully refresh the wearied horse and causeth him to travel much better, and note that this is to be done so soon as he beginneth to tire." And against this statement the original owner of the book has set a cross, as though to emphasize that this thing he has tried himself and found succeed.

Strange are the qualities of *Betonie*, for while it helpeth the bitings of mad dogs, by drinking the juice thereof, it hath also this strange propertie pertinent to it, that "if fell serpents be enclosed round about with it, they fall at such odds that they kill each other presently." And among men the same *Betonie*

Breaks friendship's ancient bond
Tho' Willow-wort makes wonted hate
shake hands.

Soothing is *Willow-wort* for men and beasts, and is of such strange virtue that when oxen at the plough are striving and unrulle, let it be put into their yokes, and presently they are appeased and quieted. The smell of *Mint* stirreth up the mind, and must therefore be good for students. "Good also (adds friend John, with splendid irrelevance) against the biting of Scorpions; a valiant venime and courageous plant." Deadly, on the other hand, is the juice of *Wolf-Bane*. He that is wounded with an arrow, knife or sword dipped therein dieth incurably within half an hour after. Yet nevertheless, so great and deadly poisoner as it is, it cures the burning bite of stinging serpents, if it be taken and applied to the place grieved. Thus all unconsciously was John Swan with his *Wolf-Bane* (whose Latine name is *Aconite*), the forerunner of all the school of homœopathsists that was to come. . . .

But other herbs there are, stranger yet, of which he still would speak. One *Nyctilops* is an herb, which in the night shineth afar off, and above all other creatures it at first sight scareth Geese! Another called *Crowfoot*, which at the sight thereof moveth a man to laughter; and yet a third, the herb *Snap-dragon*, which being hanged about a man's neck preserveth him from being bewitched, and maketh him gracious in the sight of the people; and a fourth, which applied to anything lockt and

shut, will presently open it, or being cast into an armie in the time of Bat-tel, will cause the soldiers to be in feare and runne away! Nor must the herb *Moly* be forgotten, for of it Enchanters make great brags!

But strangest perhaps of all, are the secrets and reports concerning that herb the *Moon-wort*. 'Tis highly esteemed by Alchymists, because it seemeth a very proper thing for them, and peculiar for their use in making of silver! And if a horse tread upon it, he loses his shoe and is freed from locks and fetters. And here Master Swan giveth the following strange narration to strengthen his case:

"I remember what a friend of mine of Good Credit once told me, that his Grandfather had a close, wherein it was common thing to find their horses unfettered in the morning, although they were fast shackled over night; he named the place, but I have now forgotten it. Here do I suppose might grow some of this herb to work these feats."

Oh Moon-wort tell us where thou
hidd'st the smith
Hammer and pincers thou unshoest
with.

Alas! what lock or iron Engine is't
That can thy subtil secret strength resist?

Sith the best Farrier cannot set a shoe
So sure, but thou with speed canst
undo!

Almost one can see the old man shake his head as he comments warily: "These things are strange!"

Thus much of "the greene, gallant, rich, enameled robe with which Earth clothes itself in braverie and putteth on its own rich liverie." What now of those precious stones which lie hidden deep within the earth, "those bodies without life, though some suppose," John whispers doubtfully—"that once they too had life—and died!" It may be news even to the most cunning jeweller

to know that though that most precious and hard stone the *diamond* yieldeth not to stroke or hammer or fire, yet if he hath a goat in his possession, and to her give a feast of *parsely* washed down by wine, and then so soon as she hath eaten and drank slay her straight-way and unmercifully—and then "take her blood being yet warm and into it throw the *diamond*, it shall become soft and plastic as clay"—but beware, oh enterprising Jeweller, thou stint not thy victim first of her fill of wine, for otherwise will her death be of no avail, and thy diamond, still gleam and glitter at thee, with bright and shining facets!

Of a surety he who would make his life a joyful thing should take care to be well acquainted with the magic power of precious stones! Their true value would he then set upon the *Calcedon*, and the *Rubie*, two stones "which do expell sadness and fear and also hinder ill and fearful visions and dreams in a man's sleep." He would cause an *Onyx* to be set in a ring, knowing that it "restraineth anger, stoppeth bleeding at the nose, sharpeneth the wit, and maketh men cheerfull and merie,"—various but desirable things! He would not disdain the humble *Amethyst*, for it hath power to resist drunkenness, and he would set a proper value on the *Sapphire*, which more than any stone helpeth against the stinging of serpents, poyson and pestilence. Nor would this wise and cunning fellow waste his substance in the purchase of alarum clocks and such like inventions of the Evil One, for he would be aware that "gold waxeth exceeding cold towards daylight, insomuch that they who wear rings of it may well perceive when the day is ready to dawn." By all which facts it will be seen that he who neglects not gemmes and jewels gains a great advantage over his fellow men!

Another cure for drunkenesse is set

forth by John Swan, when dealing with the fowls of the aire, and it is this:

"The egg of an *Owl* broken and put into the cups of a Drunkard or one desirous to follow drinking, will so work him, that he will suddenly loathe his good liquor and be displeased with drinking." He, on the other hand, who "would greatly help digestion, should take the skins of a *Raven* well tewed and dressed with the feathers on it and wear it next his own skin!" Consider, Gentle Reader, the amazing discomfort thereby entailed, and thank heaven on your bended knee that you have not been fated to suffer John Swan as your consulting physician-in-ordinary! Far less unpleasant certainly would have been the skinne of the *Otter* worn in stocking-soles, good for palsy, megrim, and other pains in the head.

Much as nowadays were the birds which men eat in the days when Charles the First was King, though to-day it were needless to warn against the *Mallard*.

Good sport it is to see a Maillard killed,
But with their flesh your flesh should
not be filled;
The Capon, Hen and Chicken, Partridge, Quail,
The Heathercock wholesome, the Dove,
the Rail,
The Pheasant, Woodcock, Lark, and Thrush be good,
And all that do not much delight in mud.

To turn, however, from food, to the more poetical subject of the Migration of Birds: listen, I pray, to that which he would tell concerning *Swallows*. He quotes as his authority one Oleans Magnus, who thus writes: "Although the writers of many natural things have recorded that *Swallows* change their stations, going when winter cometh, into hotter countreys; yet in the Northern Waters Fishermen oftentimes by chance draw up in their nets an abundance of *Swallows*, hanging

together in manner of a conglomerated masse. In the beginning of Autumne they gather themselves together among the canes or reeds; where providing themselves to sink into the waters, they joyn bill to bill, wing to wing, and foot to foot. For it is observed that at that time having finished their sweet singing, they descend in such a manner, and quietly again after the beginning of the Spring they fly out thence and repair their former nests." "This," saith Master Swan, "I confesse is strange," but being a prudent gentleman he does not gainsay the facts, choosing rather to close his chapter on the *Swallow* by uncontroversial and dainty verse:

Flying she sings, and singing seeketh
where
Sh' her house with cunning, not with
cost, may rear.
Her little beak she loads with little
straws,
Her wings with water, and with earth
her claws
Whereof she mortar makes, and there-
with all
Aptly she builds her semi-circle wall.

Thus much of birds. Very strange and very terrible are certain of the beasts which Master Swan knows to roam about the earth, and they have most strange qualities. The *Hyena*, for instance, "which hath such a strange power of incantation, that a touch of his shadow makes a dog not able to bark," or that fierce and cruel beast the *Lion*, "whose bones sound hollow, insomuch that some affirm fire may be struck out of them as from a flint, and sometimes he being too fiercely exasperated to anger, they are in such a heat that they even burn him up, and kill him." A clear case this of spontaneous combustion!

Somehow, it has never occurred to one to look upon the *Ferret* as a "bold and audacious beast," or to think of the *Squirrel* as having a "stately mind"

because she tarrieth always on the tops of tall trees. Yet so Master Swan describes them, when telling strange tales of the world he knows: that wonderful, seventeenth-century world where *Dragons*, *Griffons*, *Unicorns*, *Sus* and *Mermaids* all live and move and have their being. Perhaps of all these beasts the *Su* is the most terrible. "It lives in the new-found world, farre into the south, and is a strange, cruell, untameable, impatient, violent and bloody beast—of very deformed shape, monstrous presence, and a great ravener! . . . She hath a mightie great tall, fierce talons and a cruel look." Truly an awful apparition to meet in the course of a country walk, either in the Old World or the New! Very unpleasant too 'twould be, to come unawares upon a *Gorgon*, that "fearfull and terrible beast, that hath eyelids thick and high; eyes of a bloudie color, and a long hanging mane, by reason of which his looks are fearfull. . . . As for his meat it is deadly and poysonfull herbs, and he sendeth forth a horrible and filthy breath, so much, that such creatures as are drawn in that aire, are grievously afflicted, and losing both voice and sight, they fall with deadly convulsions." . . . Distinctly undesirable it is to be even sighted by a *Cockatrice*, that creature of most dubious origin, for "the beams of his eyes do corrupt the visible spirit of a man, and so the man dieth. His hissing likewise is said to be as bad in regard, that it blasteth trees and killeth birds—and if anything be slain by him, the same also proveth Venomous to such as touch it. . . ."

Well, too, is it for the cautious and peace-loving man to avoid both *Dragons* and *Griffons*, for "the *Dragon* hath wings in bignesse like to rammes, and in his chaps divers jaws of teeth of blew and green color," and the *Griffon*, tho' his wings be somewhat white, yet hath a purple body and crooked talons

and fierce eyes!" Perchance in the Klondyke is he still to be found, for "he is greatly adicted to desert places, where he diggeth up gold and giveth repulse to those that come near him! Some doubt," adds Master Swan dubiously, "whether there be any such creature, which for my part shall be left to every man's libertie." . . .

"But above all," he says, "the *Mermaids* seem to me the most strange. Some have supposed them to be devils or spirits in regard of their Whooping noise that they make. For (as if they had power to raise extraordinarie storms and tempests) the winds blew, seas rage, clouds drop presently, after they begin to call." And hereinafter follows the exceedingly pitiful and pathetic tale of one "sea woman who was taken up in the streights of a broken dyke in the year of our Lord 1403. She would often try to steal back into the sea, but being carefully watched she could not. Moreover she learned to spinne and perform other pettie offices of women, but at first they cleansed her of the sea mosse which did stick about her. She would obey her mistress (and as she was taught) kneel down with her before the crucifix; never spake, but lived dumbe and continued alive fifteen years. Then she died." . . .

And one word more, Gentle Reader, and this of warning, before thou and John Swan and I part company. Does it behove thee to entertain thy friends and comrades at a goodly feast, then in prudence (for having friends of a surety thou hast also enemies) possess thyself by fair means or foul, of the horn of a *Unicorn*. "For know that it hath many sovereigne virtues and with an admirable dexteritie expelleth poyson insomuch that being put upon a table furnished with many junkets and banqueting dishes it will quietly describe whether there be any poyson amongst them," and thus will the wick-

ed man be discovered, and thy feast end in no tragedy!

Be grateful, Gentle Reader, for this social hint, knowing that John Swan's only wish is to commit this, his prose endeavor, to the use of such as are worthy of his mean service. Or to

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quote him for the last time, "take therefore in good part what's thus intended for thee; so shall my pains not quite want their recompense nor thyself be branded with the filthy mark of foul Ingratitude.—Farewell."

Eva Anstruther.

THE GREAT IRISH EPIC.

Irish national life in the last ten years has had a wonderful new literary birth. I remember, less than two decades ago, lamenting with the authoress of the great work of translation now before me that the political campaigns of her people, their wars in Parliament, and battles in the Press during the later half of the nineteenth century had evoked no corresponding movement of romance. The poets of the rebellion had died out, and the notable little volume of verse, *The Spirit of the Nation*, published in 1845 and run to a fiftieth edition, seemed their expiring effort. We grieved together that no Scott, no Burns, showed any sign of being in the field to explain to the outer unbelieving world what treasures of passionate emotion lay buried in Celtic history, the true basis of Ireland's claim to be a nation.

To-day the scene is changed into one of hope, almost of fruition. The nakedness of the bitter political strife has clothed itself anew in poetry, as the winter fields just now in their sudden burst of April green. The language of the people has been rescued from its decay. The Celtic literature, so long despised by schools or universities too ignorant to understand it, has been rehabilitated; and at the present moment the Irish sagas are being accepted by modern criticism as the most interesting as well as the most ancient of

Western Europe, the richest in primæval tradition, and the least obscured by Latin uniformity. A band of enthusiastic workers has ransacked the libraries of the world for manuscripts dispersed from Ireland at various tragic dates—the invasions of Elizabeth, the invasions of Cromwell, the invasions of William of Orange. Within the last half-dozen years new poets have sprung up and found more than a local audience, and new Irish plays have been acted on a national stage. Last year Dr. Douglas Hyde's *Literary History of Ireland* claimed the first place in learned attention; and to-day we have Lady Gregory's monumental translation into noble and rhythmic Anglo-Irish prose of the great Erse Epic, *The Life and Death of Cuchulain*. It is of the last that I propose here to say an introductory word.

The Epic cycle of Cuchulain, or Cuchulain, is a series of heroic tales recording the wars of Ulster and Connaught fought towards the close of pagan times. As Christianity was first preached in Ireland in A.D. 434, the events narrated cannot be less old than the fourth century of our era, and are believed by the German critic Zimmer to have received their literary shape at least as long ago as the seventh or eighth. As is the case with most ancient sagas in whatever language, they are made up of prose and verse, the lat-

ter the more ancient, the prose portions being later in date and less fixed in form than the canticles, songs of triumph, and laments, some of which may be contemporaneous with the events themselves. The prose varies much in the various manuscripts, being at first little more than connecting links for the verse, memoranda for the use of reciters, explanations developed from age to age, and becoming longer and more detailed as facilities for writing were acquired by the transcribers. The full text, as we find it now, seems to have been acquired in the twelfth century, and it is from manuscripts of about that date that Lady Gregory has taken most of her translations.

With regard to the historic character of the events there has been hitherto much difference of opinion, but Dr. Hyde has, I think, fairly established it now as authentic—authentic, that is, in the main lines, as the siege of Troy is authentic. As to the details, they have doubtless been filled in, amplified, and changed in the course of the long telling of the story. There is a strong element of the supernatural throughout, just as there is in Homer's narrative; but this is kept well subordinate to the simpler human interest, and the prodigies performed by the heroes are not greater than those of the *Shah-namah* or the romance of Antar. Of witchcraft and Druidry and second-sight there is abundance. Spells are cast upon whole armies, and at a pinch the champions have resort to magic feats or are themselves assailed by magic. There are transformations into birds and fish and beasts of prey. The gift of prophecy, dimly extant in the *Morte D'Arthur* in the character of Merlyn, is here almost a common thing, and there are twenty ladies at least who, like Morgan le Fay, are of the race of the fairies. Nevertheless it is all strangely real, real in the essential characteristics of Celtic human nature as one can con-

ceive it untinged with Christianity. Nothing is more convincing about the cycle than the absence of all trace in it of Latin influences in the ways of thought or morals. Though the women pride themselves upon their chastity, virginity is no virtue with them. The men have but one wife, but are subject to many lapses, and the state of marriage seems to both rather a preference than a bond. The women enjoy rights both of property and independence unknown to the Anglo-Saxons. They take part in the councils of war, and occasionally lead armies and fight on the field of battle. Another most convincing characteristic of extreme antiquity is that the fighting is done, not on horseback, but in chariots, and with javelins rather than lances. Each hero has with him, as at Troy, his charioteer, and carries spear and shield. This is the true aspect of Celtic antiquity, from which Malory with his mounted chivalry has very widely strayed. There are wonderful horses, but they are harnessed in pairs, never singly, and the chariots of wickerwork are clearly the true Celtic chariots.

The outline of the story is as follows: We are introduced in the opening scene to the Court of Conor MacNessa, or Conchubar, King of Ulster, in his capital of Emain Macha. Conchubar, though popularly acknowledged, is not the rightful lord, having dispossessed his step-father, Fergus, who later joins his enemies. The first episode is the birth of Setanta, afterwards nicknamed "Cuchulin," or the "Little Hound of Culain," from a fierce hound he slew while yet a child. He is shown "hurling" with the other boys of the Court, and already, though the youngest, masterful through his strength. Presently, grown older, he takes up arms, having heard it predicted that the day would be fateful for whoever should make it the first of his fighting career, that such a one would achieve a great name

and die young. This glorious fate he covets. He mounts Conchubar's chariot with his charioteer Laeg, crosses the frontier challenging all comers, slays his man, runs down two stags, and captures a flight of swans with his sling. These are his first victorious deeds. We find him next with all the women in Ulster in love with him for his skill in arms, the lightness of his leap, his chess-playing, his wisdom, and his beauty, so that the men of Ulster are alarmed for their domestic peace and seek him out a wife. At last they find one endowed with the "six gifts"—the gift of beauty, the gift of song, the gift of sweet speech, the gift of needlework, the gift of magic, and the gift of chastity. "I was brought up," Emer says of herself in answer to his questions, "in ancient virtues, in lawful behavior, in the keeping of chastity, in the stateliness of form, in the rank of a queen, in all noble ways among the women of Ireland." After some new love episodes with other women, he marries her, Emer, daughter of Forgall, and is soon after acknowledged champion of Ulster.

The next episode is amusing. It is of a quarrel got up by the mischief-maker Bricriu, at a great feast he gives to Conchubar, between the three chief ladies of the court. There is much that is humanly modern in this ancient story. Bricriu persuades each lady in turn that she is the noblest and most beautiful, and so entitled to go in first to dinner, and by doing so become the recognized social Queen of Ulster. When dinner, therefore, is announced, they race for the door. Emer is the quickest afoot and outruns the other two, and puts her back to the door calling on the doorkeepers to open. But there is a delay, the others come up, and the men "rose up each to open the door before his own wife, so that they might be the first to come within." "It is a bad night this will be," remarks

Conchubar, as the ladies enter on a war of words. Each boasts of her husband's merits. "My husband is Cuchulín," cries Emer; "he is not a hound that is weak; there is blood on his spear; his white body is black with sword-cuts; there are many wounds on his thigh; his chariot is red; its cushions are red; he fights from over the ears of his horses; he leaps in the air like a salmon when he makes his hero-leap. Your fine heroes of Ulster are not worth a stalk of grass compared with him. Your fine women of Ulster are shaped like cows beside the wife of Cuchulín." The dispute is suddenly solved by Cuchulín, who lifts up the wall of the house in front of Emer, and she walks in first to the banquet-room and is proclaimed the noblest.

Tragedy, however, soon begins, and the narrative gains dignity and power. The fate of the children of Usnach is a story worthy of all Irish tears. It might have been told by Malory himself. Like all great tragedies since the world began, its chief actor is a woman—Deirdre, "on whose account many shall weep, for whose sake deeds of anger shall be done and wounds and ill-doings and the shedding of blood, a tale of wonder for ever—Deirdre!" Predestined by Cathbad the Druid to sorrow, she is kept secluded from her childhood under the charge of a wise woman; but the fame of her beauty reaches Conchubar, for she is "straight and clean like a rush on a bog," and the king resolves to marry her. She has already seen another, however, prefigured in a dream, with raven hair and a skin like the swan on the wave, and cheeks like the blood of a red-speckled calf, Naoise, son of Usnach, who with his two brothers in due time arrives and carries her away to Alban, which is Albion or Western Scotland. Then Conchubar is angry, but conceals his rage and sends, as messenger to the runaways, Fergus, the dispossessed,

and, in spite of Deirdre's warnings, relying on his promise, they go back with him to Ulster. Fergus's pledge is nevertheless broken by Conchubar, thus alienating Fergus forever. Fergus's two sons are slain in defending them, and then the three sons of Usnach, all treacherously betrayed. And Deirdre pathetically sings her threnody at which half a hundred generations of Irishmen have wept:

Dear to me the land of the East, Alban with its wonders, I would not have come from it hither, but that I came with Naoise.

Glen Laoi! where I was wont to sleep under soft coverings. Fish and venison and badger's meat were my portion in Laoi.

Glen Masan! my grief! Glen Masan! High its hartstongue, bright its stems. We were rocked to pleasant sleep above the harbor of Masan!

Glen Archan! my grief! Never went young man with a lighter heart than Naoise in Archan.

Glen Eitche! my grief! It was there I builded my first house.

Glen da Rua! my grief! sweet was the cuckoo's voice on the bending bough above Glen da Rua. Never would I have come from it at all, but that I came with my beloved.

Once, when the nobles of Scotland were drinking with the sons of Usnach, Naoise gave a kiss secretly to the daughter of the Lord of Duntreon. My head was full of jealousy; I put my boat on the waves: it was the same to me to live or to die. They followed me swimming, Ainnle and Ardan (the brothers of Naoise); they turned me back. Naoise gave me his true word he would vex me no more until he would go from me to the hosts of the dead. Och! if she knew to-night Naoise to be under the clay, it is she would cry her fill, it is I would cry along with her.

Long is the day without the sons of Usnach. Three lions were they of the hill, three darlings of the women of Britain, three heroes not good at homage. Their three shields and their spears made a bed for me how often? O young man digging the new grave, put their three swords close over them.

Till the making of this grave I was never one day alone, though it is often that myself, with yourselves, was in loneliness.

The High King of Ulster, my first betrothed, I forsook him for the love of Naoise; I left the delight of Ulster for the three heroes that were its bravest. It was Naoise that would kiss my lips, my first man, my first sweetheart. It was Ainnle would pour out my drink. It was Ardan would lay my pillow. Their dear gray eyes that were loved by women! Many looked on them as they went. Their steps were pleasant on the dark mountain.

I am Deirdre, without gladness, and I at the end of my days. Since it is grief to be without them, I myself will not tarry long.

Conchubar tries in vain to console her. Deirdre dies on his hand, and Fergus in anger secedes from the Ulster clan and war follows, and ruin and the death of thousands. The war, called "the war of the bull of Cualgne," is too long here to tell. In spite of the valor of Cuchulín, Ulster is harried and burnt by Fergus and the Queen of Connaught, and, though these are eventually driven back, there is never peace again in Ireland, and Conchubar goes down to his grave in the undying trouble roused by him for Deirdre's beauty.

Last of all Cuchulín, overwhelmed by numbers and betrayed by the spells of the daughters of Calatin, is slain by a magic spear, and with him Laeg his charioteer, and his war horse, the gray of Macha, by the King of Leinster, Lugaid. Wounded to the death, Cuchulín drags himself on foot to the shore of a lake, like King Arthur in the romance of Malory. He binds himself there to a stone pillar that he may die standing, while his enemies, afraid of him, look on from afar. At last a raven settles on his shoulder and they know that he is dead.

Then Lugaid came and lifted up Cuchulín's hair from his shoulders and

struck off his head. And the men of Ireland gave three great heavy shouts, and the sword fell from Cuchullin's hand, and the light faded away from about his head and left it pale as the snow of a single night . . . But the three times fifty queens that loved Cuchullin saw him appear in his Druid chariot, going through Emain Macha; and they could hear him singing the music of the Sidhe.

Such in outline is the great Irish Epic. Of its English rendering by Lady Gregory it is impossible to speak too highly. Mr. Yeats, in his preface to the volume, calls it "the best book that has ever come out of Ireland," and the praise seems to me hardly too great. Its immense merit as literature is that, without tampering with the text, or rather the many texts, of the manuscripts it has followed, it has succeeded in giving to a series of disconnected episodes a single romantic form, building them into a single tragic story, precisely as five hundred years ago Malory constructed out of the Arthurian legends his eternal monument, *The Life and Death of King Arthur*. The language chosen by the translator, also, is new in literature, and so has the charm of being entirely original. It is the Anglo-Irish speech of the Galway peasantry, to whom Lady Gregory dedicates it, with its inversions of the "woulds" and "shoulds," its peculiar grammatical forms and its idiomatic phrases. These perhaps for an instant may shock the English ear, but it is impossible to read many pages of it without recognizing the absolute fitness of the medium for the text translated. Thus we are startled at such phrases as these: "Now just at that time peace was after being

broken"; "and he saw a beautiful young girl, and she sitting there alone"; "Is it taking arms this young boy is?" "And he had on his back a black-bristled pig, and it squealing"; "It is beautiful you were up to this, proud and tall, going out with your young hounds to the hunting; it is spoiled your body is now; it is pale your hands are now." "It is a pity you to say that, and they only just after joining us." It must be remembered, however, that, though published by John Murray in London, Lady Gregory's translation is primarily intended for home consumption among those who, without being anglicized in heart or mind, have yet lost their true Irish language. To such the Anglo-Irish, a distinct dialect in use for quite two hundred years, is their living form of speech no less than Lowland Scotch is for the peasantry north of the Tweed. To have captured this for literary purposes is a very notable triumph.

Hardly less commendable is the skill with which Lady Gregory has steered her course between the rocks and shoals of taste in sexual matters which beset the translators of most ancient stories. These are admirably evaded, and as it stands the volume is one in which even the sensitive Irish soul will find no cause of offence. Some day, perhaps, when *Cuchullain* has taken rank, as it is sure to do, with its literary compeers, the sagas and romances of Norway, France, and Germany, it may be necessary to have a hardier translation, but I doubt if for general reading there will be ever one more acceptable, more brilliant, and more popular than **Lady Gregory's**.

Wilfrid Scawen Blunt

A FEUD IN THE FIVE TOWNS.

When Clive Timmis paused at the side-door of Ezra Brunt's great shop in Machin Street, and the door was opened to him by Ezra Brunt's daughter before he had had time to pull the bell, not only all Machin Street knew it within the hour, but also most persons of consequence left in Handbridge on a Thursday afternoon—Thursday being early-closing day. For Handbridge, though it counts sixty thousand inhabitants and is the chief of the Five Towns—that vast, huddled congeries of boroughs devoted to the manufacture of earthenware—is a place where the art of attending to other people's business still flourishes in rustic fashion.

Ezra Brunt's drapery establishment was the foremost retail house, in any branch of trade, of the Five Towns. It had no rival nearer than Manchester, thirty-six miles off; and even Manchester could exhibit nothing conspicuously superior to it. The most acutely critical shoppers of the Five Towns, women who were in the habit of coming to London every year for the January sales, spoke of Brunt's as a "right-down good shop." And the husbands of these ladies, manufacturers who employed from two hundred to a thousand men, regarded Ezra Brunt as a commercial magnate of equal importance with themselves. Brunt, who had served his apprenticeship at Birmingham, started business in Machin Street in 1862, when Handbridge was half its present size and all the best shops of the district were in Oldcastle, an ancient burg contiguous with, but holding itself profoundly aloof from, the industrial Five Towns. He paid eighty pounds a year rent, and lived over the shop, and in the summer quarter his gas bill was al-

ways under a sovereign. For ten years success tarried, but in 1872 his daughter Eva was born and his wife died, and from that moment the sun of his prosperity climbed higher and higher into heaven. He had been profoundly attached to his wife, and, having lost her, he abandoned himself to the mercantile struggle with that morose and terrible ferocity which was the root of his character. Of rude, gaunt aspect, gruffly taciturn by nature, and variable in temper, he yet had the precious instinct for soothing customers. To this day he can surpass his own shopwalkers in the admirable and tender solicitude with which, forsaking dialect, he drops into a lady's ear his famous stereotyped phrase: "Are you receiving proper attention, Madam?" From the first he eschewed the facile trickeries and ostentations which allure the populace. He sought a high-class trade, and by waiting he found it. He would never advertise on hoardings; for many years he had no signboard over his shop front; and whereas the name of "Bostocks," the huge cheap drapers lower down Machin Street on the opposite side, attacks you at every railway station and in every tramcar, the name of "E. Brunt" is to be seen only in a modest regular advertisement on the front page of "The Staffordshire Signal." Repose, reticence, respectability: it was these attributes which he decided his shop should possess, and by means of which he succeeded. To enter Brunt's with its silently swinging doors, its broad, easy staircases, its long floors covered with warm, red linoleum, its partitioned walls, its smooth mahogany counters, its unobtrusive mirrors, its rows of youths and virgins in black, and its

pervading atmosphere of quietude and discretion, was like entering a temple before the act of oblation has commenced. You were conscious of some supreme administrative influence everywhere imposing itself. That influence was Ezra Brunt. And yet the man differed utterly from the thing he had created. His was one of those dark and passionate souls which smoulder in this harsh midland district as slag-heaps smoulder on the pit-banks, revealing their strange fires only in the darkness.

In 1899 Brunt's establishment occupied four shops, Nos. 52, 56, 58 and 60, in Machin Street. He had bought the freeholds at a price which timid people regarded as exorbitant, but the solicitors of Hanbridge secretly applauded his enterprise and shrewdness in anticipating the enormous rise in ground-values which has now been in rapid, steady progress there for more than a decade. He had thrown the interiors together and rebuilt the frontages in handsome freestone. He had also purchased several shops opposite, and rumor said that it was his intention to offer these latter to the Town Council at a low figure if the Council would cut a new street leading from his premises to the Market Square. Such a scheme would have met with general approval. But there was one serious hiatus in the plans of Ezra Brunt—to wit, No. 54 Machin Street. No. 54, separating 52 and 56, was a chemist's shop, shabby but sedate as to appearance, owned and occupied by George Christopher Timmis, a mild and venerable citizen, and a local preacher in the Wesleyan Methodist Connexion. For nearly thirty years Brunt had coveted Mr. Timmis's shop; more than twenty years had elapsed since he first opened negotiations for it. Mr. Timmis was by no means eager to sell—indeed his attitude was distinctly a repellent

one—but a bargain would undoubtedly have been concluded, had not a report reached the ears of Mr. Timmis to the effect that Ezra Brunt had remarked at the "Turk's Head" that "the' old leech was only sticking out for every brass farthing he could get." The report was untrue, but Mr. Timmis believed it, and from that moment Ezra Brunt's chances of obtaining the chemist's shop vanished completely. His lawyer expended diplomacy in vain, raising the offer week by week till the incredible sum of three thousand pounds was reached. Then Ezra Brunt himself saw Mr. Timmis, and without a word of prelude said: "Will ye take three thousand guineas for this bit o' property?" "Not thirty thousand guineas," said Mr. Timmis quietly; the stern pride of the benevolent old local preacher had been aroused. "Then be damned to you!" said Ezra Brunt, who had never been known to swear before. Thenceforth a feud existed, not less bitter because it was a feud in which nothing was said and nothing done—a silent and implacable mutual resistance. The sole outward sign of it was the dirty and stumpy round brick shop-front of Mr. Timmis, squeezed in between those massive luxurious facades of stone which Ezra Brunt soon afterwards erected. The pharmaceutical business of Mr. Timmis was not a very large one, and, fiscally, Ezra Brunt could have swallowed him at a meal and suffered no inconvenience; but in that the aged chemist had lived on just half his small income for some fifty years past, his position was impregnable. Hanbridge smiled cynically at this *impasse* produced by an idle word, and recognizing the equality of the antagonists, leaned neither to one side nor to the other. At intervals, however, the legend of the feud was embroidered with new and effective

detail in the mouth of some inventive gossip, and by degrees it took high place among those piquant social histories which illustrate the real life of a town, and which parents recount to their children with such zest in moods of reminiscence.

When George Christopher Timmis buried his wife, Ezra Brunt, as a near neighbor, was asked to the funeral. "The *cortège* will move at half-past 1," ran the printed invitation, and at 1.15 Brunt's carriage was decorously in place behind the hearse and the two mourning coaches. The demeanor of the chemist and the draper towards each other was a sublime answer to the demands of the occasion: some people even said that the breach had been healed; but these were not of the discerning.

The most active person at the funeral was the chemist's only nephew, Clive Timmis, partner in a small but prosperous firm of majolica manufacturers at Bursley. Clive, who was seldom seen in Hanbridge, made a favorable impression on everyone by his pleasing, unaffected manner, and his air of discretion and success. He was a bachelor of thirty-two, and lived in lodgings at Bursley. On the return of the funeral party from the cemetery, Clive Timmis found Brunt's daughter Eva in his uncle's house. Uninvited, she had left her place in the private room at her father's shop in order to assist Timmis's servant Sarah in the preparation of that solid and solemn repast which must inevitably follow every proper interment in the Five Towns. Without false modesty she introduced herself to one or two of the men who had surprised her at her work, and then quietly departed just as they were sitting down to table and Sarah had brought in the hot tea-cakes. Clive Timmis saw her only for a moment, but from that moment she was his one thought. During the evening, which he

spent alone with his uncle, he behaved in every particular as a nephew should, yet he was acting a part; his real self roved after Ezra Brunt's daughter, wherever she might be. Clive had never fallen in love, though several times in his life he had tried hard to do so. He had long wished to marry—wished ardently; he had even got into the way of regarding every woman he met, and he met many, in the light of a possible partner. "Can it be *she*?" he had asked himself a thousand times, and then answered half sadly, "No." Not one woman had touched his imagination, coincided with his dream. It is strange that after seeing Eva Brunt he forgot thus to interrogate himself. For a fortnight, while he went his ways as usual, her image occupied his heart, throwing that once orderly chamber into the wildest confusion; and he let it remain, dimly aware of some delicious danger. He inspected the image every night before he slept, and every morning when he awoke, and made no effort to define its distracting charm; he knew only that Eva Brunt was absolutely and in every detail unlike all other women. On the second Sunday he murmured during the sermon: "But I only saw her for a minute." A few days afterwards he took the tram to Hanbridge.

"Uncle," he said, "how should you like me to come and live here with you? I've been thinking things out a bit, and I thought perhaps you'd like it. I expect you must feel rather lonely now."

The neat, fragrant shop was empty, and the two men stood behind the big glass-fronted case of Burroughs and Wellcome's preparations. Clive's venerable uncle happened to be looking into a drawer marked "*Gentiane Rad. Pulv.*" He closed the drawer with slow hesitation, and then, stroking his long white beard, replied in that deliberate voice which seemed always to tremble with religious fervor, "The hand of

the Lord is in this thing, Clive. I have wished that you might come to live here with me. But I was afraid it would be too far from the works."

"Pooh! That's nothing," said Clive.

As he lingered at the shop door for the Bursley car to pass the end of Machin Street, Eva Brunt went by. He raised his hat with diffidence, and she smiled. It was a marvellous chance. His heart leapt into a throb which was half agony and half delight. "I am in love," he said gravely. He had just discovered the fact, and the discovery filled him with exquisite apprehension.

If he had waited till the age of thirty-two for that springtime of the soul which we call love, Clive had not waited for nothing. Eva was a woman to enravish the heart of the man whose imagination could pierce the agitating secrets immured in that calm and silent bosom. Slender and scarcely tall, she belonged to the order of spare, slight-made women, who hide within their slim frames an endowment of profound passion far exceeding that of their more voluptuously formed sisters; who never coarsen into stoutness; and who at forty are as disturbing as at twenty. At this date Eva was twenty-six. She had a rather small, white face, which was a mask to the casual observer, and the very mirror of her feelings to anyone with eyes to read its signs. "I will tell you what you are like," said Clive to her once; "you are like a fine race-horse, always on the quiver." Yet many people considered her cold and impassive. Her walk and bearing showed a sensitive independence, and when she spoke it was usually in tones of command. The girls in the shop, where she was a power second only to Ezra Brunt, were a little afraid of her, chiefly because she poured terrible scorn on their small affectations, jealousies, and vendettas. But they liked her because, in their own phrase, "there was no nonsense about" this re-

doubtable woman. She hated shams and make-believes with a bitter and ruthless hatred. She was the heiress to at least five thousand a year, and knew it well, but she never encouraged her father to complicate their simple mode of life with the pomps of wealth. They lived in a house with a large garden at Pireford, which is on the summit of the steep ridge between the Five Towns and Oldcastle, and they kept two servants and a coachman who was also gardener. Eva paid the servants good wages and took care to get good value therefor. "It's not often I have any bother with my servants," she would say, "for they know that if there is any trouble I would just as soon clear them out and put on an apron and do the work myself." She was an accomplished house-mistress, and could bake her own bread; in towns not one woman in a thousand can bake. With the coachman she had little to do, for she could not rid herself of a sentimental objection to the carriage; it savored of "airs"; when she used it she used it as she might use a tramcar. It was her custom, every day except Saturday, to walk to the shop about eleven o'clock, after her house had been set in order. She had been thoroughly trained in the business, and had spent a year at a first-rate shop in High Street, Kensington. Millinery was her speciality, and she still watched over that department with a particular attention, but for some time past she had risen beyond the limitations of departments, and assisted her father in the general management of the vast concern. In commercial aptitude she resembled the typical Frenchwoman. Although he was her father, Ezra Brunt had the wit to recognize her talents, and he always listened to her suggestions, which, however, sometimes startled him. One of them was that he should import into the Five Towns a *modiste* from Paris, offering a salary of two hundred a year.

The old provincial stood aghast! He had the idea that all Parisian women were stage-dancers. And to pay four pounds a week to a female! Nevertheless Mademoiselle Bertot, styled in the shop "Madame," now presides over Ezra Brunt's dressmakers, draws her four pounds a week (of which she saves two), and by mere nationality has given a unique distinction and success to her branch of the business. Eva occupied a small room opening off the principal showroom, and during hours of work she issued thence but seldom. Only customers of the highest importance might speak with her. She was a power felt rather than seen. Employés who knocked at her door always did so with a certain awe of what awaited them on the other side, and a consciousness that the moment was unsuitable for levity. "If you please, Miss Eva—" Here she gave audience to the "buyers" and window-dressers, listened to complaints and excuses, and occasionally had a secret orgy of afternoon tea with one or two of her friends. None but these few girls, mostly younger than herself and remarkable only in that their dislike of the snobbery of the Five Towns, though less fiercely displayed, agreed with her own, really knew Eva. To them alone did she unveil herself, and by them she was idolized. "She is simply splendid when you know her—such a jolly girl!" they would say to other people, but other people, especially other women, could not believe it. They fearfully respected her because she was very well dressed, and had quantities of money. But they called her "a curious creature"; it was inconceivable to them that she should choose to work in a shop; and her tongue had a causticity which was sometimes exceedingly disconcerting and mortifying. As for men, she was shy of them, and moreover she loathed the elaborate and insincere ritual of deference which the average man prac-

tises towards women unrelated to him, particularly when they are young and rich. Her father she adored, without knowing it; for he often angered her, and humiliated her in private. As for the rest, she was after all only six-and-twenty.

"If you don't mind, I should like to walk along with you," Clive Timmis said to her one Sunday evening in the porch of the Bethesda Chapel.

"I shall be glad," she answered at once, "Father isn't here and I'm all alone." Ezra Brunt was indeed seldom there, counting, in the matter of attendance at chapel, among what were called "the weaker brethren."

"I am going over to Oldcastle," Clive explained calmly.

So began the formal courtship—more than a month after Clive had settled in Machin Street, for he was far too discreet to engender, by precipitancy, any suspicion in the haunts of scandal that his true reason for establishing himself in his uncle's household was a certain rich young woman who was to be found every day next door. Guided as much by instinct as by tact, Clive approached Eva with an almost savage simplicity and naturalness of manner, ignoring not only her father's wealth, but all the feigned punctilio of a wooer. His face said: "Let there be no beating about the bush; I like you." Hers answered, "Good! We will see." From the first he pleased her, and not least in treating her exactly as she would have wished to be treated, namely as a quite plain person of that part of the middle class which is neither upper nor lower. Few men in the Five Towns would have been capable of forgetting Ezra Brunt's income in talking to Ezra Brunt's daughter. Fortunately Timmis had a proud, confident spirit, the spirit of one who unaided has wrested success from the world's death-like clutch. Had Eva the reversion of fifty thousand a year instead of five, he, Clive, was still

a prosperous plain man, well able to support a wife in the position to which God had called him. Their walks together grew more and more frequent, and they became intimate, exchanging ideas and rejoicing openly at the similarity of those ideas. Although there was no concealment in these encounters, still there was a circumspection which resembled the clandestine. By a silent understanding Clive did not enter the house at Pireford; to have done so would have excited remark, for this house, unlike some, had never been the rendezvous of young men; much less, therefore did he invade the shop. No! The chief part of their lovemaking (for such it was, though the term would have roused Eva's contemptuous anger) occurred in the streets; in this they did but follow the traditions of their class. Thus the idyll, so matter-of-fact upon the surface, but within which glowed secret and adorable fires, progressed towards its culmination. Eva, the artless fool—oh, how simple are the wisest at times!—thought that the affair was hid from the shop. But was it possible? Was it possible that in those tiny bedrooms on the third floor, where the evening heavy hours were ever lightened with breathless interminable recitals of what some "he" had said and some "she" had replied, such an enthralling episode should escape discovery? The dormitories knew of Eva's "attachment" before Eva herself. Yet none knew how it was known. The whisper arose like Venus from a sea of trivial gossip, miraculously, exquisitely. On the night when the first rumor of it traversed the passages there was scarcely any sleep at Brunt's, while Eva up at Pireford slumbered as a young girl.

On the Thursday afternoon with which we began, Brunt's was deserted save for the housekeeper, and Eva, who was writing letters in her room.

"I saw you from my window, coming

up the street," she said to Clive, "and so I ran down to open the door. Will you come into father's room? He is in Manchester for the day, buying."

"I knew that," said Timmis.

"How did you know?" She observed that his manner was somewhat nervous and constrained.

"You yourself told me last night—don't you remember?"

"So I did."

"That's why I sent the note round this morning to say I'd call this afternoon. You got it, I suppose?"

She nodded thoughtfully. "Well, what is this business you want to talk about?"

It was spoken with a brave carelessness, but he caught the tremor in her voice, and saw her little hand shake as it lay on the table amid her father's papers. Without knowing why he should do so, he stepped hastily forward and seized that hand. Her emotion unmanned him. He thought he was going to cry; he could not account for himself.

"Eva," he said thickly, "you know what the business is; you know, don't you?"

She smiled. That smile, the softness of her hand, the sparkle in her eye, the heave of her small bosom . . . it was the divinest miracle! Clive, manufacturer of majolica, went hot and then cold, and then his wits were suddenly his own again.

"That's all right," he murmured, and sighed, and placed on Eva's lips the first kiss that had ever lain there.

"Dear boy," she said later, "you should have come up to Pireford, not here, and when father was there."

"Should I?" he answered happily. "It just occurred to me all of a sudden this morning that you would be here, and that I couldn't wait."

"You will come up to-night and see father?"

"I had meant to."

"You had better go home now."

"Had I?"

She nodded, putting her lips tightly together—a trick of hers.

"Come up about half-past eight."

"Good! I will let myself out."

He left her, and she gazed dreamily at the window, which looked on to a whitewashed yard. The next moment someone else entered the room with heavy footsteps. She turned round a little startled.

It was her father.

"Why! You are back early, father! How——" She stopped. Something in the old man's glance gave her a premonition of disaster. To this day she does not know what accident brought him from Manchester two hours sooner than usual, and to Machin Street instead of Pireford.

"Has young Timmis been here?" he inquired curtly.

"Yes."

"Ha!" with subdued, sinister satisfaction, "I saw him going out. He didn't see me." Ezra Brunt deposited his hat and sat down.

Intimate with all her father's various moods, she saw instantly and with terrible certainty that a series of chances had fatally combined themselves against her. If only she had not happened to tell Clive that her father would be at Manchester this day! If only her father had adhered to his customary hour of return! If only Clive had had the sense to make his proposal openly at Pireford some evening! If only he had left a little earlier! If only her father had not caught him going out by the side door on a Thursday afternoon when the place was empty! Here, she guessed, was the suggestion of furtiveness which had raised her father's unreasoning anger, often fierce, and always incalculable.

"Clive Timmis has asked me to marry him, father."

"Has he!"

"Surely you must have known, father, that he and I were seeing each other a great deal."

"Not from your lips, my girl."

"Well, father——" Again she stopped, this strong and capable woman, gifted with a fine brain to organize, and a powerful will to command. She quailed, robbed of speech, before the causeless, vindictive, and infantile wrath of an old man who happened to be in a bad temper. She actually felt like a naughty schoolgirl before him. Such is the tremendous influence of life-long habit, the irresistible power of the *patria potestas* when it has never been relaxed. Ezra Brunt saw in front of him only a cowering child.

"Clive is coming up to see you to-night," she went on timidly, clearing her throat.

"Humph! Is he?"

The rosy and tender dream of five minutes ago lay in fragments at Eva's feet. She brooded with stricken apprehension upon the forms of obstruction which his despotism might choose.

The next morning Clive and his uncle breakfasted together as usual in the parlor behind the chemist's shop.

"Uncle," said Clive brusquely, when the meal was nearly finished, "I'd better tell you that I've proposed to Eva Brunt."

Old George Timmis lowered the "Manchester Guardian" and gazed at Clive over his steel-rimmed spectacles.

"She is a good girl," he remarked, "she will make you a good wife. Have you spoken to her father?"

"That's the point. I saw him last night, and I'll tell you what he said. These were his words: 'You can marry my daughter, Mr. Timmis, when your uncle agrees to part with his shop!'"

"That I shall never do, nephew," said the aged patriarch quietly and deliberately.

"Of course you won't, uncle. I

shouldn't think of suggesting it. I'm merely telling you what he said." Clive laughed harshly. "Why," he added, "the man must be mad!"

"What did the young woman say to that?" his uncle inquired.

Clive frowned. "I didn't see her last night," he said. "I didn't ask to see her. I was too angry."

Just then the post arrived, and there was a letter for Clive, which he read and put carefully in his waistcoat pocket.

"Eva writes asking me to go to Pireford to-night," he said, after a pause. "I'll soon settle it, depend on that. If Ezra Brunt refuses his consent, so much the worse for him. I wonder whether he actually imagines that a grown man and a grown woman are to be . . . Ah, well! I can't talk about it. It's too silly. I'll be off to the works."

When Clive reached Pireford that night, Eva herself opened the door to him. She was wearing a gray frock, and over it a large white apron, perfectly plain.

"My girls are both out to-night," she said, "and I was making some puffs for the sewing-meeting tea. Come into the breakfast-room. . . . This way," she added, guiding him. He had entered the house on the previous night for the first time. She spoke hurriedly, and, instead of stopping in the breakfast-room, wandered uncertainly through it into the greenhouse, to which it gave access by means of a French window. In the dark, confined space, amid the close-packed blossoms, they stood together. She bent down to smell at a musk-plant. He took her hand and drew her soft and yielding form towards him and kissed her warm face.

"Oh, Clive!" she said. "Whatever are we to do?"

"Do?" he replied, enchanted by her instinctive feminine surrender and reliance upon him, which seemed the more precious in that creature so proud and

reserved to all others. "Do! Where is your father?"

"Reading the 'Signal' in the dining-room."

Every business man in the Five Towns reads the "Staffordshire Signal" from beginning to end every night.

"I will see him. Of course, he is your father; but I will just tell him—as decently as I can—that neither you nor I will stand this nonsense."

"You mustn't—you mustn't see him."

"Why not?"

"It will only lead to unpleasantness."

"That can't be helped."

"He never, never changes when once he has said a thing. I know him."

Clive was arrested by something in her tone, something new to him, that in its poignant finality seemed to have caught up and expressed in a single instant that bitterness of a lifetime's renunciation which falls to the lot of most women.

"Will you come outside?" he asked in a different voice. Without replying she led the way down the long garden, which ended in an ivy-grown brick wall and a panorama of the immense valley of industries below. It was a warm, cloudy evening. The last silver tinge of an August twilight lay on the shoulder of the hill to the left. There was no moon, but the splendid watch-fires of labor flamed from ore-heap and furnace across the whole expanse, performing their nightly miracle of beauty. Trains crept with noiseless mystery along the middle distance, under their canopies of yellow steam. Further off the far-extending streets of Hanbridge made a map of starry lines on the blackness. To the south-east stared the cold, blue electric lights of Knype railway station. All was silent, save for a distant thunderous roar, the giant breathing of the forge at Shirley Bar Ironworks.

Eva leaned both elbows on the wall and looked forth.

"Do you mean to say," said Clive, "that Mr. Brunt will actually stick by what he has said?"

"Like grim death," said Eva.

"But what's his idea?"

"Oh! How can I tell you?" she burst out passionately. "Perhaps I did wrong. Perhaps I ought to have warned him earlier—said to him 'Father, Clive Timmis is courting me!' Ugh! He cannot bear to be surprised about anything. But yet he must have known . . . It was all an accident, Clive, all an accident. He saw you leaving the shop yesterday. He would say he *caught* you leaving the shop—*sneaking* off like . . ."

"But Eva—"

"I know, I know! Don't tell me! But it was that, I am sure. He would resent the mere look of things, and then he would think and think, and the notion of your uncle's shop would occur to him again, after all these years. I can see his thoughts as plain . . . ! My dear, if he had not seen you at Machin Street yesterday, or if you had seen him and spoken to him, all might have gone right. He would have objected, but he would have given way in a day or two. Now he will never give way. I asked you just now what was to be done; but I knew all the time that there was nothing."

"There is one thing to be done, Eva, and the sooner the better."

"Do you mean that old Mr. Timmis must give up his shop to my father? Never! Never!"

"I mean," said Clive quietly, "that we must marry without your father's consent."

She shook her head slowly and sadly, relapsing into calmness.

"You shake your head, Eva; but it must be so."

"I can't, my dear."

"Do you mean to say that you will allow your father's childish whim—for it's nothing else; he can't find any objection to me as a husband for you, and

he knows it—that you will allow his childish whim to spoil your life and mine? Remember you are twenty-six and I am thirty-two."

"I can't do it. I daren't. I'm mad with myself for feeling like this, but I daren't. And even if I dared, I wouldn't. Clive, you don't know! You can't tell how it is!"

Her sorrowful pathetic firmness daunted him. She was now composed, mistress again of herself; and her moral force dominated his.

"Then you and I are to be unhappy all our lives, Eva?"

The soft influences of the night seemed to direct her voice as, after a long pause, she uttered the words: "No one is ever quite unhappy in all this world." There was another pause, as she gazed steadily down into the wonderful valley. "We must wait."

"Wait!" echoed Clive with angry grimness. "He will live for twenty years."

"No one is ever quite unhappy in all this world," she repeated dreamily, as one might turn over a treasure in order to examine it.

Now for the epilogue to the feud. Two years passed, and it happened that there was to be a Revival at the Bethesda Chapel. One morning the superintendent minister and the revivalist called on Ezra Brunt at his shop. When informed of their presence, the great draper had an impulse of anger, for, like many stouter chapel-goers than himself, he would scarcely tolerate the intrusion of religion into commerce. However, the visit had an air of ceremony, and he could not decline to see these ambassadors of heaven in his private room. The revivalist, a cheery, shrewd man, whose powers of organization were obvious and who seemed to put organization before everything else, pleased Ezra Brunt at once. "We want a specially good con-

gregation at the opening meeting to-night," said the revivalist. "Now, the basis of a good congregation must necessarily be the regular pillars of the church, and therefore we are making a few calls this morning to insure the presence of our chief men, the men of influence and position. You will come, Mr. Brunt, and you will let it be known among your employes that they will please you by coming, too?" Ezra Brunt was by no means a regular pillar of the Bethesda, but he had a vague sensation of flattery, and he consented; indeed, there was no alternative.

The first hymn was being sung when he reached the chapel. To his surprise, he found the place crowded in every part. A man whom he did not know led him to a wooden form which had been put in the space between the front pews and the communion rail. He felt **strange there, and uneasy, apprehensive.** The usual discreet somnolence of the chapel had been disturbed as by some indecorous but formidable awakener; the air was electric; anything might occur. Ezra was astounded by the mere volume of the singing; never had he heard such singing. At the end of the hymn the congregation sat down, hiding their faces in expectation. The revivalist stood erect and terrible in the pulpit, no longer a shrewd, cheery man of the world, but the very mouth-piece of the wrath and mercy of God. Ezra's self-importance dwindled before that gaze till from a renowned magnate of the Five Towns he became an item in the multitude of suppliants. He profoundly wished he had never come.

"Remember the hymn," said the revivalist, with austere emphasis:

My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

The admirable histrionic art with which he intensified the consonants in the last line produced a tremendous effect. Not for nothing was this man

celebrated throughout Methodism as a saver of souls. When, after a pause, he raised his hand and ejaculated, "Let us pray," sobs could be heard throughout the chapel. The Revival had begun.

At the end of a quarter of an hour, Ezra Brunt would have given fifty pounds to be outside, but he could not stir. He was magnetized. Soon the revivalist came down from the pulpit and stood within the communion rail, whence he addressed the nearest part of the people in low, soothing tones of persuasion. Apparently he ignored Ezra Brunt, but the man was convicted of sin and felt himself melting like an icicle in front of the fire. He recalled the days of his youth, the piety of his father and mother, and the long traditions of a stern Dissenting family; he had back-slidden, slackened in the use of the means of grace, run after the things of this world. It is true that none of his chiefest iniquities presented themselves to him; he was quite unconscious of them, even then; but the lesser ones were more than sufficient to overwhelm him. Class leaders were now reasoning with stricken sinners, and Ezra, who could not take his eyes off the revivalist, heard the footsteps of those who were going to the "inquiry room" for more private counsel. In vain he argued that he was about to be ridiculous; that the idea of him, Ezra Brunt, a professed Wesleyan for half a century, being publicly "saved" at the age of fifty-seven, was not to be entertained; that the town would talk; that his business might suffer if for any reason he should be morally bound to apply to it too strictly the principles of the New Testament. He was under the spell. The tears coursed down his long cheeks, and he forgot to care, but sat entranced by the revivalist's marvellous voice. Suddenly, with an awful sob, he bent and hid his face in his hands. The spectacle of

the old, proud man helpless in the grasp of profound emotion was a sight to rend the heartstrings.

"Brother, be of good cheer," said a tremulous and benign voice above him. "The love of God compasseth all things. Only believe."

He looked up and saw the venerable face and long white beard of George Christopher Timmis.

Ezra Brunt shrank away, embittered and ashamed.

"I cannot," he murmured with difficulty.

"The love of God is all-powerful."

"Will it make you part with that bit o' property, think you?" said Ezra Brunt, with a kind of despairing ferocity.

"Brother," replied the aged servant

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of God unmoved, "if my shop is in truth a stumbling-block in this solemn hour, you shall have it."

Ezra Brunt was staggered.

"I believe. I believe," he cried.

"Praise God!" said the chemist, with majestic joy.

Three months afterwards Eva Brunt and Clive Timmis were married. It is characteristic of the fine sentimentality which underlies the surface harshness of the inhabitants of the Five Towns that, though No. 54, Machin Street was duly transferred to Ezra Brunt, the chemist retiring from business, he has never rebuilt it to accord with the rest of his premises. In all its shabbiness it stands between the other big dazzling shops as a reminding monument.

E. A. Bennett.

ENGLISH PATRIOTIC POETRY.

In turning over the pages of any collection of patriotic poems, such as the Songs of England's Glory, which Messrs. Isbister have just issued (3s. 6d.net.), or the volume of Patriotic Song selected by Arthur Stanley, and published by Pearson (5s.), the first thing to strike the reader is that the great achievements of Englishmen have, as a rule, not been sung by their contemporaries, but by the poets of a later age. Shakespeare, who was in his first vigor as a dramatist in the years following the defeat of the Invincible Armada, has not a word to say about that stupendous victory, or about the English admirals whose names it immortalized; he puts his expression of the new patriotism into the mouth of "Old John of Gaunt" in *Richard II.*; he puts his confidence in the future of the kingdom into the mouth of Falconbridge in *King John*; and he celebrates the vir-

tues of his countrymen under the strain of war, their doggedness, their valor, their grumbling patience, their proud humility, by a chronicle history of the campaign which closed with the Battle of Agincourt, nearly 200 years before. For any political celebration whatever of the victory of 1588 we have to wait another 200 years, and then we have nothing better than Macaulay's ballad; while for any effective glorification of the Elizabethan sea-kings England had to wait till Tennyson wrote his "Ballad of the Revenge." The advantages for poetry of such postponement are obvious. "Poetry," as Aristotle teaches us, "is more philosophical than history"; it requires the actions with which it deals to be intelligible as a whole, with a "beginning, middle, and end"; whereas the real significance of near-lying events is often obscured in a multitude of detail, and what the

public of the day finds interesting in the detail. Further, the lapse of time heightens the stature of national heroes, and substitutes "the idea of their life" for a mere agglomeration of virtues and defects. Still, as no second Shakespeare has arisen, it is impossible not to regret that the greatest of English poets should not have celebrated the first and greatest exploit of the English Navy.

The only poem about the achievements of the Navy before the great outburst of song in the middle of the 18th century seems to be a popular ballad called "The Honor of Bristol," with a title as glorious as the fight it celebrates:—

The Honour of Bristol: showing how the Angel Gabriel of Bristol fought with three ships, who boarded as many times, wherein we cleared our decks and killed 500 of their men and wounded many more, and made them fly into Cales, when we had lost but three men, to the honor of the Angel Gabriel of Bristol.

The ballad is assigned by experts to the year 1626. This is the sort of thing:—

This lusty ship of Bristol
Sailed out adventurously
Against the foes of England,
Her strength with them to try;
Well victualled, rigged, and manned
she was,
With good provision still,
Which made them cry "To sea, to sea,
With the Angel Gabriel."

The Captain, famous Netherway
(That was his noble name);
The Master—he was called John Mines—
A mariner of fame;
The Gunner, Thomas Watson,
A man of perfect skill;
With many another vallant heart
In the Angel Gabriel.

We have a similar doggerel ballad about the prowess of the English Army in Flanders under Lord Willoughby

d'Eresby, who succeeded Leicester in command. In the apocryphal engagement described 1,500 English routed 40,000 Spaniards. But, happily, in the case of the Army, we are not left to the popular poets. We have, as already said, Shakespeare's *Henry V.*, and we have also Drayton's splendid "Ballad of Agincourt," the first line of which by itself—"Fair stood the wind for France"—would stamp Drayton as a great poet. The civil wars give us, on the Cavalier side, Lovelace's "Stone walls do not a prison make" and "I could not love thee, dear, so much"; and, on the other, a few sonnets of Milton, and Marvell's Horatian Ode to the Protector, which, by a curious irony, is now only remembered for the two perfect stanzas about King Charles:—

He nothing common did or mean
Upon that memorable scene,
But with his keener eye
The axe's edge did try;

Nor called the gods with vulgar spite
To vindicate his helpless right,
But bowed his comely head
Down, as upon a bed.

In the eighteenth century it was once more the English sailor who vindicated the honor of his country, and accordingly most of the patriotic verse there is of this period has to do with the Navy. There are a few ballads, the best of which are Campbell's admirable "Battle of the Baltic" and one by Prince Hoare upon the *Arethusa*, sent by Keppel to demand the surrender of the *Belle Poule*. But the special characteristic of the period is the sailors' song; Garrick's "Hearts of Oak" and Campbell's "Ye Mariners of England" and Cunningham's "A wet sheet and a flowing sea" are still popular songs, and so are Charles Dibdin's "Tom Bowling" and "Blow high, blow low," though these last, perhaps, can scarcely rank as patriotic pieces. The fact, nev-

ertheless, must not be forgotten that Dibdin's sea-songs—there are some hundred of them—did as much for the popularity of the Navy as Mr. Kipling's "Barrack-room Ballads" have done for the Army in our own generation. Dibdin is said to have brought more men into the Navy than the press-gangs. In his autobiography he says, with pardonable pride, "My songs have been the solace of sailors in long voyages, in storms, in battles; and they have been quoted in mutinies, to the restoration of order and discipline." His son Thomas, who wrote as many songs as Solomon, is remembered to-day by a rollicking patriotic ditty with the refrain:—

O it's a snug little island!
A right little, tight little island,
Search the globe round, none can be
found
So happy as this little island.

Another good song of his, in the same racy style, that succeeded in being popular without becoming vulgar, has to do with recruiting for the Army:—

"Who'll serve the King?" cried the sergeant aloud;
Roll went the drum and the fife played so sweetly;
"Here, master sergeant," said I from the crowd,
"Is a lad who will answer your purpose completely."
My father was a corporal and well he knew his trade,
Of women, wine, and gunpowder he never was afraid;
He'd march, fight—left, right,
Front flank—centre rank,
Storm the trenches—court the wenches,
Loved the rattle—of a battle,
Died with glory—lives in story.
And, like him, I found a soldier's life,
if taken smooth and rough,
A very merry, very down derry, sort of life enough.

As the century closes we come upon a galaxy of great poets, but their con-

tributions to patriotic song do not amount to very much. It was the day of cosmopolitanism, and the two greatest of England's poets in that period—Shelley and Byron—spent much of their life away from England. The stanzas in the third canto of "Childe Harold," which describe the night before Waterloo, must rank as Byron's "Song of England's Glory." Sir Walter Scott was much more patriotic, but his genius was dramatic and his historical sympathies were with the Stuarts, so that he has given us no national song half as good as his Jacobite, "Bonnie Dundee." By the side of that spirited and romantic production how tame appears the "War-song" written for the Royal Edinburgh Light Dragoons:—

To horse! to horse! the sabres gleam;
High sounds our bugle call;
Combined by honor's sacred tie,
Our word is—Laws and Liberty!
March forward, one and all!

But Scott has done better for us than that. The song called "The Bold Dragoon," which he wrote after the battle of Badajos for a Yeomanry dinner, is as good as anything of Thomas Dibdin's; and in a higher vein everybody knows the lines from the "Lay of the Last Minstrel":—

Breathes there a man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said
This is my own, my native land!

Everybody knows, also, the heroic quatrain that comes as a motto to one of the chapters in "Old Mortality":—

Sound, sound the clarion, fill the fife!
To all the sensual world proclaim,
One crowded hour of glorious life
Is worth an age without a name.

Wordsworth has a few noble sonnets, more noble even than those of Milton, from which he borrowed his form and some of his inspiration.

From Wordsworth we pass to his

successor in the laureateship. One of the bardic gifts of Tennyson was the prophetic soul by which he felt the first faint premonitions of any popular movement; and just as we find in "Locksley Hall" the gospel of industrialism that came to a head in the International Exhibition ten years later, and in "In Memoriam" speculations about evolution which were presently to stir the Churches after the publication of Darwin's "Origin of Species," so we find that Tennyson was Imperialist before Imperialism. It seems hardly credible that the following passage, in the Epilogue to the "Idylls," was written thirty years ago, during Mr. Gladstone's first Ministry:—

And that true North, whereof we lately
heard
A strain to shame us "keep you to
yourselves;
So loyal is too costly! friends—your
love
Is but a burthen: loose the bond and
go."
Is this the tone of empire? here the
faith
That made us rulers? this, indeed, her
voice
And meaning, whom the roar of Hougoumont
Left mightiest of all peoples under
Heaven?
What shock has fool'd her since, that
she should speak
So feebly? Wealthier—wealthier—hour
by hour!
The voice of Britain, or a sinking land,
Some third-rate isle half-lost among her
seas?
There rang her voice, when the full city
peal'd
Thee and thy Prince! The loyal to their
Crown
Are loyal to their own far sons, who
love
Our ocean-empire, with her boundless
homes
For ever-broadening England, and her
throne
In our vast Orient, and one isle, one
isle,
That knows not her own greatness: if
she knows
And dreads it, we are fall'n.

But a passage such as that, interesting as it is to look back upon, was probably not specially effective at the time. We do not go to poetry for argument. Equally interesting, and, perhaps, equally nugatory, were the verses addressed to Lord Palmerston in 1852 on his fear of offending France. Tennyson's effective contributions to the poetry of patriotism have been his ballads descriptive of English achievements in the past, the magnificent "Ballad of the Revenge," "The Defence of Lucknow," and "The Charge of the Light Brigade." We have also to thank him for singing in "Maud" the pallinode to his crude glorification of industrial peace in "Locksley Hall." It may be that Tennyson performed not one of his least services to the Empire when, under shelter of a *dramatis personæ*, he wrote such lines as these:—

For I trust if an enemy's fleet came
yonder round by the hill,
And the rushing battle-bolt sang from
the three-decker out of the foam
That the smooth-faced snub-nosed rogue
would leap from his counter and
till,
And strike, if he could, were it but
with his cheating yard-wand,
home.

Besides all this, Tennyson gave us his "Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington"—one of the noblest elegies in literature; which is also an "Ode to Civic Duty." To the other great Victorian poets our debt is far smaller. Browning gave us seven touching lines in his "Home Thoughts from the Sea"; Clough a single quatrain on "The Green Fields of England"; Arnold his magnificent but disconcerting image of the "weary Titan." Of the "minor poets," there is Sir Francis Doyle, with his "Private of the Buffs"; and Sir Henry Yule, with his "Birkenhead," joined Charles Wolfe in that happy company who, by one poem having deserved well of the Commonwealth,

have attained to the immortality of the English language.

About living poets silence might be best; and yet to ignore the contributions of to-day to the songs of England would be manifestly unfair. At the head of our Imperial singers, then, for the effectiveness of his appeal to the average man, we must acknowledge the place of Mr. Kipling. Twice and thrice he has expressed the mind of the nation to itself; once by his ballad of "The English Flag," and again by his "Recessional" after the great Jubilee of Queen Victoria, and again by his summons of the nation to train its youth for war. Whether these poems have staying power is another question. They have, at any rate, gone straight to their mark, like the best rhetoric, and that is high praise. Mr. Newbolt has devoted himself to singing, ballad-wise, particular exploits of Army and Navy, and being a cunning master of verse, and full, besides, of an heroic spirit, he has stirred us by his numbers again and again. If cavillers will have it that he has not beaten his early success of "Drake's Drum," that is because

The London Times.

"Drake's Drum" is impossible to beat. Mr. Henley has adventured the difficult task, refused by Shakespeare and by Tennyson, of the patriotic lyric, and he cannot be said to have succeeded. Englishmen are shamefaced and will not tolerate direct appeals to patriotism, even at a crisis, if the note is pitched high. They will respond to such a sober strain as "Of old sat Freedom on the Heights," or "Here and here did England help me"; but no Englishman ever went so far as to say "my England," and Mr. Henley, by attempting to put such words into his mouth, has shown himself not of the right English strain. Still, Mr. Henley's patriotic verse now and then strikes the right note:—

The day's high work is over and done,
And these no more will need the sun;

Blow, you bugles of England, blow!
These are gone whither all must go,
Mightily gone from the field they won.

Mr. Watson has too often found himself out of sympathy with national policy to have contributed much to patriotic poetry, but he has two noble stanzas on "England and her Colonies."

TO LORD KITCHENER.

Doer of deeds, word-sparer, whose firm will
Warped not with waiting, though the time was long,
In those dark hours, when weaker hearts stood still,
Thine own beat steadfast, and we knew thee strong;

But few divined how generous and how wise,
Till Peace revealed thee for all eyes to scan,
And through the Warrior's seeming-cold disguise
Out-flashed in magnanimity the Man.

James Rhodes.

The London Times.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS.

Miss Mary Johnston is at work on a fourth novel.

Mr. Justin McCarthy, it is announced, has nearly completed his two-volume history of "The Reign of Queen Anne," and will follow it with a collection of personal reminiscences to be called "Portraits of the Sixties."

According to the London "Publishers' Circular" the "series" or "library" plan of publishing copyright books, novels in particular, is working disastrously. Nowadays a novel published on its own account fares better than one which bears the uniform of a "series."

Mr. Herbert Paul's volume on Matthew Arnold will be added to the Macmillans' "English Men of Letters" series this month; Sir Alfred Lyall's Tennyson in August, Mr. Frederic Harrison's Ruskin in September; and Mr. Gilbert Chesterton's Browning in October.

Mr. Samuel T. Pickard, who a few years ago edited and published "Hawthorne's First Diary, with an Account of Its Discovery and Loss," has lately become convinced that he was mistaken in accepting the diary as a genuine bit of Hawthorne's juvenile work, and has withdrawn the book from circulation.

About forty German poets, prose writers and philosophers, with their families, have undertaken to live in a single large house near Berlin, on a community plan not unlike that of Brook Farm. It is safe to predict

that the experiment will not be long protracted. Forty families of the literary class cannot get on peaceably under one roof in Germany or elsewhere.

On Sunday, July 5th, at the little town of Villers-Cotterêts, in the department of Aisne, France, there was unveiled a monument commemorating the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of the elder Dumas. The minister of public instruction, M. Chaumie, delivered an address and a number of artists from the Comedie Française represented the most famous scenes from the best-known of Dumas's plays.

The report that M. Jules Verne was threatened with total blindness was, it appears, exaggerated. He has been troubled for some time with a cataract growth but is able to keep at work and says cheerfully that he does not mean to stop until he has written one hundred novels. Thus far he has published but eighty-two, the latest entitled "Jean Marie Cabidoulin," but he has seventeen more written and ready for publication and now, in his seventy-fourth year, is working upon the other volume necessary to round out the one hundred.

Lord Acton, whose death was recently recorded, was one of the most widely-read scholars in England, but he was too much engaged in absorbing and assimilating learning to give much time to literary production. Mr. Gladstone's "Ask Acton: he's sure to know," has often been quoted as evidence of his erudition. His library, said to be the finest private

library in England, contained sixty thousand volumes.

Under the title "The Dictum of Reason on Man's Immortality", E. B. Treat & Co. publish two discourses by the Rev. Dr. David Gregg, which aim to show how far mere reason, without the aid of revelation, has reassured man as to his immortal existence. The discourses are characterized by warmth of feeling and devout earnestness, but they are perhaps better calculated to strengthen the convictions of those who want to believe than to convince those who are inclined seriously to doubt or stubbornly to deny the fact of human immortality.

More than one over-burdened problem novel of the day might find its complement in Maude Egerton King's delicate and sensitive story of burgher-life among the Granbündeners. The title, "Bread and Wine," is a fitting one for what is really a study of the sacramental quality of the common acts of life. The plot is simple, turning upon the estrangement between Christopher Valar and the young wife whom he marries after the village coquette has jilted him; and the interest is vividly concentrated upon these two, set apart as they are in their wholesome forest freedom from the morbid impulses of a more highly organized world. The artistic quality of Mrs. King's work is shown not only in her unerring choice of the significant, but in the quaint and simple charm of her narrative style, which is exactly in harmony with such a pastoral subject as this. Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

To name the birds without a gun has become so much the fashion of late that a book written from the viewpoint of a naturalist, a sportsman and a gentleman, all three, has the distinc-

tion of novelty. In "Upland Game Birds," by Edwin Sandys and T. S. Van Dyke, the quail, partridge, grouse, turkey and ptarmigan are described in detail, themselves, their habits and their haunts, as well as their times and their seasons. For the sportsman it is a stimulating chronicle, alert, full of incident and practical suggestion. There are not a few nature-lovers who will be gratified to find in this book such intimate and friendly revelations of bird life, and whose qualms about the use of fire-arms will be considerably allayed by thus realizing the acuteness of observation which a sportsman's proper training necessarily fosters. The Macmillan Co.

Mr. Henry Austin Clapp's "Reminiscences of a Dramatic Critic" (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.) is not an attempt at a history of the American stage, nor a survey of the performances of the actors and actresses who have helped to make it brilliant. It is rather a collection of essays and criticisms, with a certain independence and also with a certain sequence, in which the writer, who holds an enviable place among American dramatic critics, records what has most interested him or most pleased him in the tendencies of the modern drama, and the stage careers of its most distinguished exponents. It is less a book written with set purpose than one which has written itself quite freely and spontaneously out of the author's ample fund of experience and reminiscence. Free alike from malice and from pettiness, it is critical without being unkind, and appreciative without being indiscriminating. The face of William Warren, beloved of theatre-goers for half a century, looks out at the reader from a photogravure frontispiece. Other portraits are of Charlotte Cushman, Edwin Booth, Tommaso Salvini, Adelaide Neilson and Henry Irving.

CRADLE SONG.

Sweetheart, sleep; Night spreads her
pall

Over the silent town,
And the far-off tide is musical
Where the little lines of breakers fall,
And the weary sun goes down.

Sleep, oh sleep! for the world reposes;
Droop your head like the tired roses;
Dream till the daffodil dawn uncloses
Over the sleepless sea.

White birds drift to their dizzy nest
Safe on the headland steep;
God's great rose is pale in the West,
My little rose must sink to rest
And flower in the land of sleep.

Sleep, for the wind of night is blow-
ing
Echoes faint of the cattle lowing,
Drowsy scents of the long day's mow-
ing,
Over the hills to me.

Now the moon like a silver ship
Steers through the starry sky;
And the lighthouse at the harbor's lip,
Where the clammy seaweeds cling and
drip,
Winks with his fierce red eye.

Sleep, oh sleep! in the magic gloam-
ing
Glide to the land where the elves are
roaming;
Wake when the sun flames over the
foaming
Splendid spray of the sea!

St. John Lucas.

Longman's Magazine.

ON MALVERN HILL.

A strong wind brushes down the clover,
It sweeps the tossing branches bare,
It blows the poisoning kestrel over
The crumbling ramparts of the Caer.

It whirls the scattered leaves before
us
Along the dusty road to home;
Once it awakened into chorus
The heart-strings in the ranks of
Rome.

There—by the gusty coppice border,
The shrilling trumpets broke the halt.

The Roman line, the Roman order
Swayed forwards to the blind assault.

Spearman and charioteer and bowman
Charged, and were scattered into
spray.

Savage and taciturn the Roman
Hewed upward in the Roman way.

There, in the twilight, where the cattle
Are lowing home across the fields—
The beaten warriors left the battle—
Dead—on the clansmen's wicker
shields.

The leaves whirl in the wind's riot,
Beneath the Beacon's jutting spur,
Quiet are Clan and Chief, and quiet
Centurion and Signifer.

John Masefield.

The Speaker.

INVOCATION TO YOUTH.

Come then, as ever, like the wind at
morning!

Joyous, O Youth, in the aged world
renew

Freshness to feel the eternities around
it,

Rain, stars and clouds, light and the
sacred dew.

The strong sun shines above thee;

That strength, that radiance bring!

If Winter come to Winter,

When shall men hope for Spring?

Laurence Binyon.

THE LAST RIDE.

Proudly, the Roman legend saith,
The warrior Curtius rode to death,
And spurred into the abyss abhorred
With glittering mail and flashing sword.

For thee, O soul of mine, to-day
As then, a chasm bars the way,
And soon or late thy trembling steed
Upon its brink must check its speed.

But thou, array thee in thy best,
Thy coat of proof, thy gallant crest.
Whisper a word into his ear,
Then leap to death with smiling cheer.

B. Paul Neuman.